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Local Strategic Planning and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

Rural District Planning in Zimbabwe: A Case Study

By

PlanAfric
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACPDT	Africa Community Publishing Development Trust
ADA	Agricultural Development Authority
Agritex	Agricultural Extension Workers
ARDA	Agricultural and Rural Development Authority
CA	Communal Area
CAMPFIRE	Communal Area Management for Indigenous Resources
CAP	Community Action Programme
CBCC	Capacity Building Co-ordinating Committee
CC	Christian Care
CCJP	Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DA	District Administrator
DANIDA	Danish Development Agency
DDF	District Development Fund
DDG	District Development Grants
DDL	District Development Loan
DEAP	District Environmental Action Plan
DFID	Department for International Development
DNPWLM	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DPP	Department of Physical Planning
DWD	Department of Water Development
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FC	Forestry Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
GTZ	German Technical Assistance
ICA	Intensive Conservation Area
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IRDA	Integrated Rural Development Areas
IRWSSP	Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme
IUCN	World Conservation Union
JICA	Japanese Development Agency
KMTC	Kulima Mbobumi Training Centre, Binga
LSCF	Large Scale Commercial Farms
MEC	Ministry of education and Culture
MLA	Ministry of Land and Agriculture
MLGNH	Ministry of Local Government and National Housing
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MNAECC	Ministry of National Affairs, Employment Creation and Co-operatives
MMET	Ministry of Mines Energy and Tourism
MHCW	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
MPP	Micro Projects Programme
MPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
MRRWD	Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development
MS	Danish Association for International Co-operation
NCU	National Co-ordinating Unit
NEPC	National Economic Planning Commission

NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Royal Embassy, Agency for Development Corporation
NPA	National Planning Agency
NPWLM	National Parks and Wildlife Management
NRB	Natural Resources Board
ORAP	Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress
PA	Provincial Administrator
PAAP	Poverty Alleviation Action Plan
PC	Provincial Council
PCAA	Provincial Councils and Administration Act
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
PDSP	Pilot District Support Programme
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
RDC	Rural District Council
RDCA	Rural District Council Act
RDCCBP	Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme
RDDC	Rural District Development Committee
RDF	Rural Development Fund
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RMP	Rural Master Plan
RTCPA	Rural Town and Country Planning Act
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SDA	Social Dimension Adjustment Programme
SDF	Social Development Fund
SFM	Shared Forest Management
SIDA	Swedish Development Agency
SRL	Sustainable Rural Livelihoods
SSCF	Small Scale Commercial Farms
TILCOR	Tribal Trust Land Corporation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTL	Tribal Trust Land
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VA	Village Assembly
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WRMSP	Water Resource Management Strategy Project
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers Union
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic Social Transformation
ZIMTRUST	Zimbabwe Trust
ZINWA	Zimbabwe National Water Authority
ZIPAM	Zimbabwe Institute for Public Administration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report is one of suite of three country studies of rural planning. The other two relate to Ghana and South Africa. These country studies are provided as inputs into a global study of r*ural planning in developing countries* undertaken by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) for the Department of International Development (DFID), UK. This study can be read as part of the wider study or as a stand-alone document. The recommendations have relevance to both DFID and the Government of Zimbabwe.

The aim of the case study is to provide a detailed review and critical analysis of rural planning in Zimbabwe, covering past and current systems and practices, methodological approaches and institutional frameworks; and to draw lessons and principles from experiences and practice.

The report is divided into three parts:

Part 1: Background;
Part 2: Rural Planning in Zimbabwe: the current picture described;
Part 3: Issues, problems and recommendations.

The Executive Summary presents the findings of the study from a slightly different angle and comprises four parts:

Background;
Strategy issues;
Institutional issues;
Approach issues.

Key points raised in each chapter are presented in bullet form below.

Part One: Background

Literature

- A literature review for Zimbabwe covering strategic, institutional and approach issues to rural development planning is available (pages 3-6 and Appendix 1).

History

- The 1960s were dominated by a lack of rural planning initiatives in black areas. The main planning agencies operated only in white settler areas and rural development initiatives were large-scale and designed as part of an import substitution policy (page 8).

- In the 1970s, an attempt was made to win over the rural masses by increasing investment in these areas using top-down planning mechanisms. However, the increasing activity of the nationalist movement negated the little that was achieved (page 9).

- Majority rule in the 1980s led to a strong focus on rural planning in communal areas to redress the colonial imbalance. There was an attempt to encourage district-level planning

with the introduction of a 'bottom-up' development planning system, but this lacked public resources and began losing credibility (page 10).

- The failure of the development planning system to provide an integrated development plan led to the growth of a number of new planning initiatives (pages11-12).

The rural economy

- Zimbabwe is divided into five natural regions and seven land types on the basis on land tenure and use. The majority of people live in communal areas (CAs) (previously known as African reserves or Tribal Trust Lands), which lie in marginal agricultural areas (pages 14-19).

- Land distribution has resulted in over-utilisation and environmental degradation of communal land caused by over-crowding, contrasting with the under-utilisation of agricultural land in large-scale commercial farming areas (page 17).

- Services and infrastructure to communal areas (CAs) increased substantially from 1980-1990. But during the period of the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP), 1990-1999, public spending has been dramatically reduced and greater emphasis placed on reduction of costs and recouping the cost of service provision through user charges (page 20).

- Rural-urban linkages are complex and little understood in Zimbabwe. Planning systems reinforce the dichotomy between 'rural' and 'urban' development (pages 20-21).

Part Two: Strategy issues

Rural economy

- Zimbabwe is vulnerable to drought, but has been self-sufficient in food for many years. A lack of a co-ordinated agricultural policy and strategy for food reserves has resulted in the need to import food at high cost in times of drought (page 18).

National policy context

- There is no clear co-ordinated rural development strategy for Zimbabwe. There are four strands of policy: decentralisation; land reform; poverty alleviation; and environment. These have not resulted in an integrated holistic rural development strategy (pages 24-30).

Rural development programmes (RDPs) and projects

- There are hundreds of rural development projects operating at sub-district level. The majority of these are initiated by NGOs. This plethora of projects is unco-ordinated and impossible to evaluate (page 34 and pages 36-40).

- Government-led rural development programmes (RDPs) have been a strategy for central government (backed by donors) in attempting to improve services and infrastructure in rural areas. There are over 30 government led RDPs (excluding health and education) operating in Zimbabwe (p 36 & Appendix 2). RDC-financed programmes are limited (page 38).

- Private sector involvement in rural development is diverse, ranging from investor and financier to corporate community responsibility which involves donating time and funds to communities (page 41).

- There is only one donor-operated RDP but donor support underpins most government and NGO activity (page 42).

Planning systems

- There are seven planning systems in Zimbabwe, each with its own focus, activities and outputs. The strategic interests of the different systems may be summarised as comprehensive, spatial (physical planning), economic and financial (development planning), agricultural land use (land use planning) and natural resource management (water, environmental, national parks and forestry planning) (pages 44-60).

Issues and problems

Policy is heavily influenced by the priorities of development agencies which fund research and development in the country. These reflect international development fashions rather than the needs of Zimbabwe's rural environment (page 65).

- Since the introduction of the economic structural adjustment programme in 1990, a policy vacuum has opened up as the focus has shifted from 'development' to 'macro-economic stability' and from 'equity' to 'economic growth' (page 65).

- There has also been a failure to address key problems in the rural areas such as access to land, drought, unemployment, and inflation (page 66).

Recommendations

National rural development strategy for sustained, improved rural livelihoods

- The government should seek to develop a national vision for the sustained improvement of rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe and an integrated set of rural development strategies to meet such a vision.

- District visions and strategies should also be encouraged, guided by the national vision and strategies.

- There is a need for rural development strategies to be multi-sectoral.

Rural Policy Institute

- In order to assist the above process, a rural policy institute or think tank may be appropriate. Such an institute could be established as a non-government body, but with full support and participation from all stakeholders.

- Among the immediate areas of concern that may be tackled by such a think tank, or through any other mechanism, are:
    - rural/urban linkages,

- further research and development of sustainable rural livelihoods analysis, especially the difficulty of reconciling short-term survival and long-term environmental sustainability, and
- increased data on who is doing what, where, at what value and with what impacts.

Common approach to structural issues in sustainable rural livelihoods (SRLs)

- All agencies working within the field of rural development and rural planning should recognise the importance of addressing key structural issues impacting upon SRLs, such as land reform, poverty reduction and inequality. They should support national efforts to resolve these and integrate proposed reforms into their own strategies and proposals.

Part Three: Institutional issues

National framework and decentralisation

- The central government framework for rural development planning lacks a single clear co-ordinating agency and hence comprises many ministries each with its own leadership functions and perceptions (page 22).

- Decentralisation reforms led to the restructuring of local government and amalgamation of white-run rural councils representing large-scale commercial farming areas and poor black African councils representing communal areas. The Rural District Council Act 1988 was implemented in 1993. The Provincial Councils Act and government directives in 1984 and 1985 led to the creation of the development planning system (page 27).

- Zimbabwe is currently divided into eight administrative provinces and co-ordinated by the provincial administrator (PA). The provincial council brings together political leadership and is serviced by the provincial development committee which has several sub-committees. It falls under the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing (MLGNH) (page 27).

- There are 57 rural district councils (RDCs) run by an elected council and staff headed by a chief executive officer (CEO). The RDC falls under the MLGNH. The key co-ordinating mechanism is the rural district council development committee (RDDC) which is still chaired by a senior government official (the district administrator) (page 23).

- In order for functions to be effectively decentralised to the RDC, the capacity of RDCs needed to be strengthened. The RDC capacity-building programme seeks to achieve this (pages 61-62).

Rural development programmes and projects

- Government-led programmes are largely sector-based with little dialogue between ministries. There has been a slow movement towards decentralisation as RDPs channel and co-ordinate activities through RDCs (i.e. finances and planning) (pages 36-42).

Planning systems

- Physical planning in rural areas is an activity largely undertaken by the Department of Physical Planning (DPP) within the MLGNH. DPP acts for local authorities but hopes to devolve more planning functions to them (page 44 and Box 1).

- Development planning has been subject to much confusion between the National Economic Planning Commission (NEPC) and DPP. NEPC now has no presence at the provincial or district level. As a consequence, the DPP provides technical support to provinces and RDCs which are the lead planning agencies for development planning at district level (page 47 and Box 2).

- Environmental planning is undertaken by the Department of Natural Resouces (DNR) in the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Tourism (MMET) in partnership with RDCs. District environmental action plans (DEAPs) are funded by UNDP. The relationship of DEAPs to other planning systems is not clear (page 51 and Box 3).

- The lead agency for land-use planning is the Department of Agriculture and Extension (AGRITEX) situated within the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture. AGRITEX works closely with the RDC and traditional leaders (page 53 and Box 4).

- The water catchment process is led by the Department of Water Development in the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development (MRRWD). This will pass to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) when it is established. The programme has strong donor inputs from GTZ, Dutch aid and DFID (page 55 and Box 5).

- National park plans are led by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) and it has established a stakeholder consultation group including RDCs, representatives from CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) and others. A planning unit has been established within DNPWLM supported by World Bank, JICA and UNDP (page 58).

- Forest action plans are led by the Forestry Commission and other stakeholders (especially rural district councils, RDCs) and supported by GTZ and DFID (page 59).

Issues and problems

- Government is very centralised although there is a growing commitment to decentralisation. Despite this, the decentralisation policy is open to different interpretations and there is no detailed implementation programme (page 66).

- The centralised nature of bureaucracy in Zimbabwe has led to frustration at sub-national level as there are no resources available to implement plans (page 68).

- More resources are becoming available at district level as a result of donor agencies funding capital projects through RDCs. The benefits of these arrangements are compromised by each donor having its own programme, priorities and planning system, placing a huge management burden on RDCs (page 69).

- The multiplicity of agency involvement in rural development hampers planning efforts. Lack of co-ordination is heightened in Zimbabwe by high levels of suspicion between agencies (page 67 and Box 7).

- The seven planning systems do not work together and tend to be sees as rivals. The key agency responsible for each system believes that it takes the lead in rural development (page 71 and Box 8).

- The public sector suffers from a lack of resources, inexperience and unmotivated staff, and dependency on donors.

- The lack of capacity increases in proportion to physical and hierarchical distance from the centre. The rural district council capacity-building programme RDCCBP) is seeking to redress this (page 73).

- Rural planning should be viewed as a political process and it should be noted that there are constant efforts to change the balance of power, e.g. strengthening RDCs but not community groups (page 71).

- External agencies bring three main problems with them: they have their own priorities and agendas; own planning and monitoring systems; their support increases dependency (page 70).

Recommendations

Decentralisation

- There is a need for clearer statements from government, endorsed by the cabinet, that decentralisation is primarily intended to devolve functions to rural district councils (RDCs) and only secondarily to de-concentrate responsibilities within ministries.

- Government should establish a timetable for decentralisation and ensure the commitment of line ministries to this programme.

- Decentralisation to RDCs should extend beyond planning and should include devolution of powers, functions and, in particular, access to or control over resources needed to implement plans.

- The allocation of resources at district level must be linked to the strategies and priorities contained in district development plans.

- Decentralisation must be combined with capacity-building (capacity to plan, implement and manage development programmes) at all levels, based upon a learning by doing approach.

Capacity-building at community level

- Considerable resources are required to build capacity at community level so as to enable sub-district institutions, especially the future village assemblies, to plan, manage and conserve natural resources.

- Similarly, capacity-building is required to enable community-based organisations to plan and manage local projects. Capacity-building should be facilitatory and imbued with a learning-by-doing philosophy.

Capacity-building at district level

- The increasing role of the RDCs in rural planning requires that they establish separate planning departments, headed by a professional rural planner. This will need to be achieved within the wider context of strengthening RDCs through the human resources development component of the rural district council capacity-building programme(RDCCBP). As an interim measure, it may be necessary for RDCs to combine to support one professional planner who would serve two or three districts.

- The rural district development committee (RDDC) needs to be strengthened by seeking to ensure that all stakeholders attend, especially where rural planning matters are decided. This may mean altering formats and styles so as to make the committee's deliberations more attractive to NGOs and the private sector. Efforts need to be made to ensure that district government officials attend, either through mandating or incentives.

- Overseas agencies should come together to agree upon a common set of requirements for project and programme support at district level. The current situation, where each donor requires the rural district council (RDC) to comply with its own financial, management and monitoring systems is placing intolerable burdens upon RDCs. At the very least, there should be a common core set of requirements with minimal additional special records related to specific donor issues.

Provincial level

- The provincial role in rural planning should be to act as a linkage point between bottom-up and top-down planning, as well as to monitor progress and provide special technical support to RDCs.

National level

- Strategies should be developed by the Public Service Commission to ensure that government develops its own capacity to plan and manage rural development rather than rely on donor technical support. Donor support should be seen as building capacity rather than substituting for lack of national resources.

- National level integration of rural planning could be achieved through the capacity-building co-ordinating committee (CBCC) as it includes all the relevant government departments and ministries (except AGRITEX –which should be rectified). The rationale for using this mechanism is that district level integration of planning must be primarily achieved through the RDC and the rural district development committee (RDDC) and that the capacity-building coordinating committee (CBCC) is the national committee best linked to the rural local authorities.

- The question of agreeing which planning agency (whether the National Economic Planning Commission, the Department of Physical Planning or the Department of Water Development) should be first among equals is likely to remain unresolved as each has a legitimate claim. Therefore, urgent efforts should be made to achieve complementarity between the seven different planning systems in Zimbabwe. This may best be achieved through the CBCC. To reach agreement, it will be necessary to agree the function, scale, focus and timeframe of each planning output, the way each planning output relates to the others and the roles of the different agencies.

- In addition to the above, each planning system should relate to the RDC in a similar manner and in accordance with decentralisation. Guidelines should be made available to RDCs for each planning system setting out the expected role of the RDC at district and sub-district levels.

Rural planning fora

- The feasibility of establishing rural planning fora at national and provincial levels should be explored. Such fora would serve to bring together representatives of all key stakeholders (e.g. government, rural district councils (RDCs), NGOs, donors and the private sector) to identify problems and issues and seek ways forward. Their main focus would be on finding ways of working together so as to complement each other and to discuss strategic and policy issues. These partnership arrangements could be jointly funded by all sectors and meetings would take place perhaps two or three times a year. The provincial fora would include RDC representatives and seek to provide an interface between national and district levels. The rural district development committee (RDDC) may act as a rural planning forum at district and local level by committing one or two of its meetings a year to a review of development and progress and involving all sectors in such discussions.

Section Four: Approaches

Rural development projects and programmes

- The approach of small-scale projects varies from simple classroom construction to pilot projects. These may be precursors to rural development programmes involving new and different approaches to rural planning (page 34).

- The process of government-led rural development programmes is largely dependent on the donor funding the programme; but it is also affected by the lead government ministry, its interests and approach (page 37).

- The rhetoric of participatory planning approaches may exist within virtually all rural development programmes (RDPs). However, such the application of such approaches is limited in practice (page 37).

Rural planning systems

- Physical planning tends to be technical and top-down in approach. Participatory planning is encouraged but not systematically adopted (page 45).

- Development planning is supposed to be a bottom-up process, but village and ward plans have never been developed. Even at the district level, the process has been dominated by sector ministries outlining their priorities to the district administrator or chief executive officer. The process is still non-participatory (page 48).

- The district environmental action plan process is participatory and a pilot activity and has been based on participatory rural appraisals and other participatory approaches (page 51).

- Land-use planning is a technical exercise but has become more participatory, particularly in recent years (page 53).

- Water catchment planning is claimed to be a bottom-up process with strong ownership from elected water boards. It is seen by its proponents as an overarching process for other planning systems such as district environmental action planss, development and physical planning (page 55).

- The preparation of national park plans is an essentially technical management exercise (page 58).

- Forest action plans have been undertaken with widespread consultation with the aim of adopting a long-term process approach to planning (page 59).

Issues and problems

- There has been no coherent approach to rural planning and a lack of collaboration between agencies and complementarity between agencies (pages 76-82).

- There is a gap between planning and implementation due to the lack of devolution and exacerbated by the failure to adopt appropriate planning processes.

- There has been a great deal of rhetoric about community participation in planning, but few interventions initiated by communities (pages 76-82).

- Most rural development initiatives have followed an inappropriate inflexible blueprint approach to planning (page 76).

Recommendations

Iterative approach

- Rural planning should be iterative with a balance of top-down and bottom-up approaches - with clear national policy guidelines coming down and local needs and priorities filtering up.

Strategic approach

- At all levels there is a need for a simple but relatively comprehensive (i.e. wide-ranging) and long term strategy. The approach needed to prepare this should be multi-sectoral, cutting across different planning professions/systems.

- This strategy should be based upon the identification of key issues, problems and potentials and should provide a basis for detailed sectoral strategies and projects.

Process approach

- Planning should be a process approach rather than following a blueprint, with less emphasis on comprehensive plan documents and more on multiple outputs (e.g. basic strategy; sectoral policies, budgets, project plans). There should be constant monitoring and revision of rolling plans. The quality of planning should evolve over time in response to perceived needs.

District and local level

- Community planning should, in particular, be demand-led. However, outsiders can facilitate by providing information and advice and the district level must be responsive.

- At district and local levels, there will be two types of planning:
  (i) planning activities over which that level has control (including control over resources) and
  (ii) identifying priorities in order to lobby for support from higher levels for those activities and resources over which there is no control.

PART 1

BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This report is one of three country studies on rural planning. The other two relate to South Africa and Ghana. These country studies are provided as inputs into a global study of r*ural planning in developing countries* being undertaken by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) for the Department of International Development (DFID), UK.

Whilst this country study is intended primarily as a component part of the global study, it can be read as a stand-alone document and includes recommendations that have relevance to both DFID and the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ).

1.2 Terms of reference

The purpose of the overall study is to undertake research to identify the key principles of a strategic and partnership approach to planning the development of rural areas from a sustainable rural livelihoods perspective. The study examines current practice in rural planning and explores opportunities for improving strategic and participatory approaches to such planning.

The overall study is intended to contribute towards the work of DFID's sustainable rural livelihoods (SRL) theme group and to lay the groundwork for developing and testing innovative local planning.

The aim of the country case study is to provide a detailed review and critical analysis of rural planning in Zimbabwe, covering past and current systems and practices, methodological approaches and institutional frameworks. The review is comprehensive in that it embraces the rural planning work of government, donors, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. Its purpose is to draw lessons and principles from experience and practice.

Appendices detail the activities of donors and international agencies in support of rural planning in particular districts and illuminating potential problems and issues.

1.3 Relevant studies and literature

Rural planning may usefully be seen as comprising three crucial elements. The first concerns the *content* of rural planning, that is the strategies and policies that underlie what rural planning seeks to achieve. The second may be termed the *institutional framework* within which rural planning operates, especially the agencies and actors involved and how they interact. The third aspect can be called the *approach* to rural planning and is often seen in terms of the polarities of a top-down, blueprint approach or a bottom-up process approach. There has been no overall study of rural planning in Zimbabwe which has sought to present and review these three aspects of the subject in an integrated way. Rather, the literature comprises studies which have focussed on one aspect or the other, although there is considerable interaction between institutional and approach issues.

There has been interest in all three aspects of rural planning since Independence and it is broadly true to say that between 1980 and 1988 the central issue was the content of planning. During the late 1980's, attention switched to the institutional framework, prompted by a growing thrust to decentralisation and the emergence of competing rural planning agencies. The interest in decentralisation has been maintained up until the present with an increasing attention given to building the capacity of the rural district councils. However, this interest has been linked to a growig debate in the 1990s about approaches to planning. Decentralisation was seen as both an institutional and an approach issue. Historically in Zimbabwe, planning approaches have been dominated by top-down, blueprint philosophies. However, since the mid-1980s, the rhetoric has stressed the need for bottom-up, participatory planning. The new ingredient in the 1990s has been a growing emphasis on the need to see planning as a process that is much more open-ended and dynamic. The rural planning literature in Zimbabwe can be seen to follow these changes in concerns over the different aspects of the subject. A bibliography is included in Appendix One.

Literature on the *content* of rural planning may be seen in the key government policy statements and planning documents. A record of the achievements of rural development policy during the 1980s is provided by Auret (1990). A number of essays analysing and assessing different rural development policies are contained in Mutizwa-Mangiza and Helmsing (1991). Rambanapasi (1990) and Gunby (1994) have provided historical reviews of rural policy change. The last concerted effort to examine rural development strategies in Zimbabwe took place at a conference organised by ZIPAM in 1992 at which a number of papers were presented. At a more recent planners workshop, Conyers (1998) presented a paper (*Which Way Strategic Planning?)* which raised a number of important content issues in the context of physical and economic planning in Zimbabwe.

Literature on *institutional framework issues* emerged in the late 1980s. Wekwete (1988) is one of the first studies of the new development planning process and Rambanapasi (1988) considers the competing positions of economic and physical planning. Helmsing and Wekwete (1990) provide further material on institutional issues, although their book looks beyond Zimbabwe. Support to the new National Planning Agency (NPA) is reflected in two studies, Carlberg and Oscarsson (1988) and Hilhorst (1989). A critical review of decentralisation in Zimbabwe in the 1980s is given by Helmsing *et al.* (1991). Conyers (1991) provides a comprehensive description of the institutional framework for rural development as well as detailing the prevailing rural development strategies.

Although the Rural District Councils Act was passed in 1988, it took six years to implement. There were many studies associated with the lead up to the process of amalgamating rural local authorities, but with little concentration on rural planning. Rather the emerging issue was the need for building the capacity of rural district councils (RDCs) to plan and manage their districts effectively. A major study by PlanAfric and Effectiveness Consultants (1994) set out a strategic plan for capacity-building. Further studies on this theme followed from PlanAfric (1995 and 1996). The continuing question of the relationship between economic and physical planning surfaces in studies on regional planning by PlanAfric (1991 and 1993) and by Zimconsult (1996).

Literature on *approaches to rural planning* in Zimbabwe is relatively scarce. A generalised critique of top-down planning has become *de rigeur* for all reports on rural planning, but there has been no clear analysis of planning approaches in Zimbabwe. A review of Zimbabwe's pilot district support programme carried out in 1996 contains important practical lessons on a "process approach" to planning. Similar lessons are also found in recent reviews undertaken by the Capacity-Building Unit of the Rural District Councils Capacity-Building Programme (MLGNH, 1998). Additional experience of rural community development for the community action

programme can be found in PlanAfric (1998) which also contains detailed analysis of different planning approaches and recommendations.

Based on this rapid review of the existing literature on rural planning in Zimbabwe, the overall conclusion is that there has been no shortage of reports on the subject during the past decade. But there has been no attempt to describe and analyse the full range of characteristics of such planning. This study may, therefore, be seen to fill a gap.

1.4 Methodology

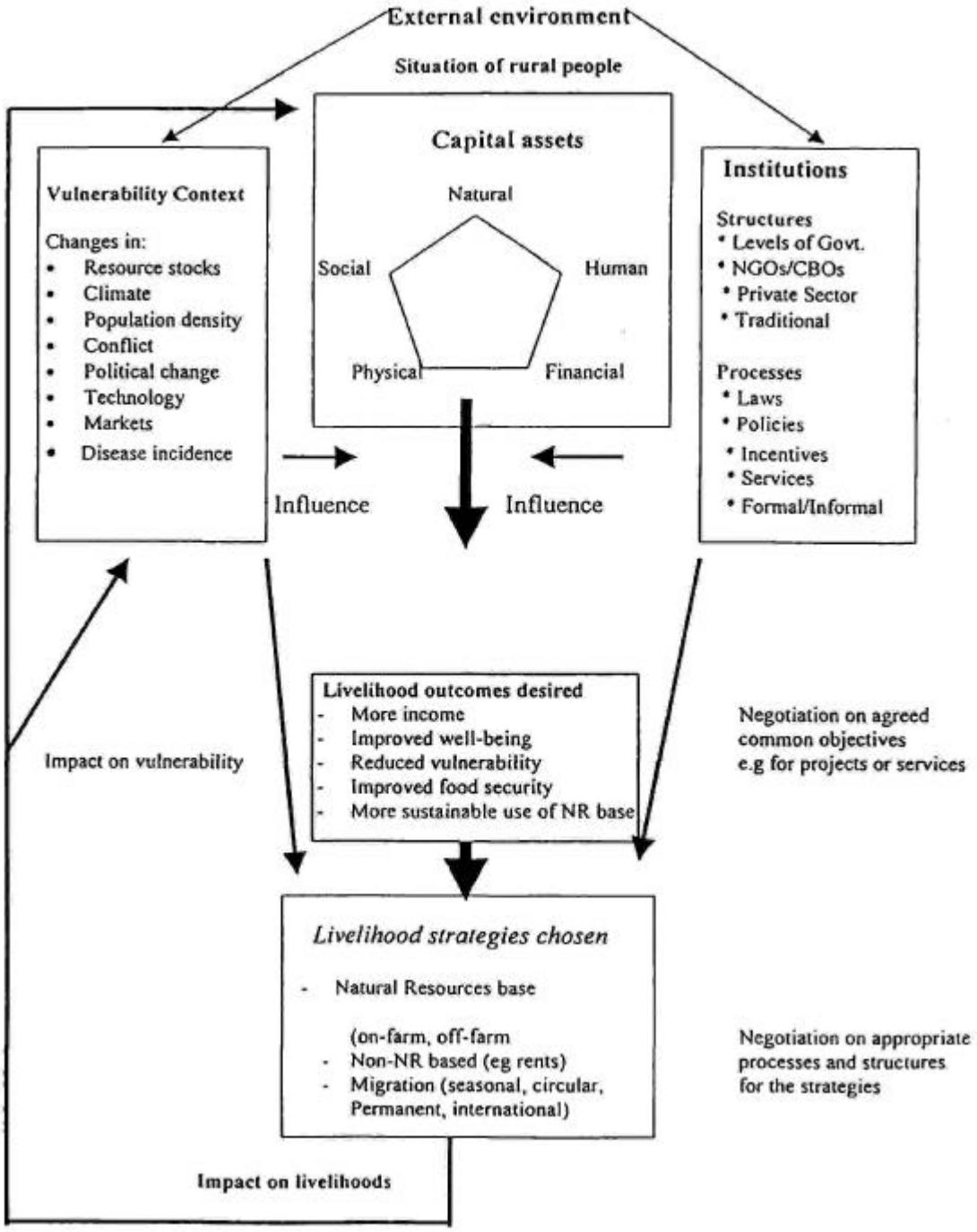
A number of different methods have been used in compiling this report. Parts 1 and 2 are based mainly on a desktop literature study and the authors' own knowledge. Part 3 describes the current state of rural planning in Zimbabwe and used a range of different approaches. A questionnaire was distributed to all provinces to gather an up-to-date picture of physical planning at district and provincial levels. This same questionnaire also requested data on the rural development programmes operating in each district. Visits were made to two provinces to obtain, through interviews, deeper reflections of senior provincial officers on the state of rural planning. Two rural district councils were also visited to obtain their perspectives. A workshop was held in Harare. Invitations were extended to seven government agencies operating different planning systems and to representatives of local government and the Rural District Council Capacity-Building Programme. This workshop enabled an exchange of information on current and intended planning practices and identified key issues and problems and possible ways forward. A report on this workshop is presented in an Appendix 5.

A consistent analytical framework runs through this report, derived from Carney (1998). It is especially apparent in the final two parts. Faludi (1973) points out that rural planning consists of both what to do (theories of planning) and how to do it (theories in planning). If these two elements are not addressed explicitly, then some confusion can reign. In addition, the institutional framework and planning structures also exert a powerful influence and need to be identified. We have therefore adopted a three-way presentation of our material using the typology of "strategies", "structures" and "processes". This underlying framework corresponds to the sustainable rural livelihoods (SRL) approach which identifies livelihood strategies and transforming structures and processes as the key factors impacting upon people's capital assets and livelihood outcomes. An adapted version of the diagram illustrating the environments within which the capital assets of rural livelihoods can be conceptualised is give in Fig. 1.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report comprises three parts. The first part provides the background. It contains an introduction and brief considers the history of rural planning in Zimbabwe. Part 2 first describes the context for rual planning in Zimbabwe's including discussion of the rural economy and rural development strategies. It then describes the various features of rural planning in Zimbabwe today. Part 3 analyses the issues and problems confronting rural planning in Zimbabwe and sets out conclusions on good and bad practice and makes a number of recommendations for improvement.

Fig. 1 SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK



CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF RURAL PLANNING IN ZIMBABWE

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides an historical context for contemporary rural planning. It is important to remember that for 20 of the 40 years of planning history presented here, the rural areas of Zimbabwe were a battlefield, both of minds and of the military. Even after Independence, much of the western rural areas of Zimbabwe were again subject to severe dislocation and military action as the so-called 'dissident war' simmered between 1982 and 1987.

The rural areas of Zimbabwe have experienced the extremes of a settler system which took the most productive land for itself and relegated the black majority to the marginal agricultural areas. The rich, white commercial farming areas were largely self-regulating, whilst the poor, black peasant subsistence farming areas were heavily regulated and oppressed. This discriminatory, dual rural system survives to the present time, although significant efforts have been made since Independence in 1980 to redress past imbalances. The land issue, and to a large extent the rural planning issue, are dominated by the historic legacy of colonial inequity.

For convenience, the chapter is divided into four main sections, each representing a decade. This is artificial, but events lend some meaning to this arbitrary division and provide a chronological sequence.

2.2 The 1960s

The first part of this decade was dominated by a lack of serious rural planning initiatives. The prevailing philosophy was couched in old colonial office terms: community development and self-reliance. In practice, this meant that the government did very little in the poor Native Reserve areas, as they were called up until 1967, and allowed few elements of autonomy or self-government. The main planning agency, the Department of Physical Planning (DPP), operated mainly in the white, urban areas undertaking typical town planning activities. Support to white commercial farmers, however, was substantial and advisory services helped with farm plans, research and all manner of assistance. Commercial farmers were allowed to create Intensive Conservation Areas (ICAs) as a form of conservation planning.

However, concern over the fact that natural resources were not being utilised to maximum potential led to river catchment planning in the 1960s with the creation of the Sabi-Limpopo Authority in 1965. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965 also led to a growing effort by the settler State to improve self-sufficiency in the face of international trade sanctions. This was the motive behind the establishment of the Tribal Trust Land Corporation (TILCOR) which sought to increase cotton production and encourage growth points in the rural areas.

2.4 The 1970s

The 1970s saw a mounting security crisis in the rural areas as the black nationalist forces increased their guerrilla incursions, especially in the east and north-east of the country. The power

of the central State, already highly centralised, increased and there was a top-down, militaristic approach to development.

In 1971, the Agricultural Development Authority (ADA) was established and given the responsibility, amongst other things, "to plan, co-ordinate and implement agricultural development in Rhodesia." The drive to improve the planning and co-ordination of rural areas continued throughout this decade, increasingly overlain with a belated and desperate effort to win over the support for the government of the black peasantry. In 1976, new Acts of parliament allowed for a more comprehensive physical planning system which included regional planning and master and local planning in rural areas. At the same time, a new Water Act required outline water plans for river systems. In practice, continued war prevented either planning system being extended to the rural areas.

By 1978, the Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Rural Development had responsibility for ADA, TILCOR, Intensive Conservation Areas (ICAs) and the Water Authorities and was the lead agency for rural development. The role of ADA was widened to include rural development and its name changed to the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA). ARDA immediately launched a new initiative to establish Integrated Rural Development Areas (IRDAs). This idea had been arisen out of an integrated plan for rural development led by the Ministry of Finance. This rush of activity in the late 1970s followed the creation of a new State, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia which, for the first time, included black politicians. The new State had to try and create support among the rural masses and it was decided to try and divert major new investment into rural areas, using a comprehensive, top-down rural planning mechanism.

2.5 The 1980s

The establishment of an independent Zimbabwe in 1980, based on black majority rule, led to new priorities but, in many ways, there was continuity of style and practice, especially in planning. The new priorities related to a major re-orientation of public sector investment towards the Tribal Trust Lands, now renamed the Communal Areas (CAs). This, in turn, required many government ministries to re-direct their attention towards rural planning and development. Thus the Department of Physical Planning became almost exclusively concerned with rural planning. It designated new sites for rural settlements, undertook layout plans for them and site plans for new rural facilities such as schools and clinics.

In terms of approach, planning remained a top-down activity. The settler command economy was replaced by a socialist command economy in which centralised planning became even more entrenched. The public sector-oriented development planning that emergence in the late 1970s was continued. Five-year national development plans were undertaken by economic and finance planning departments within central government.

By the mid 1980s, it became apparent that a new initiative to stimulate district level planning was needed. Accordingly, a new approach - bottom-up planning - was added to the development planning system and enshrined in legislation. The idea was to build a planning system that allowed development plans to commence from the village and influence each level upwards to ward, district and province level. In practice, this system quickly became discredited because of two factors. Firstly, there were insufficient resources to meet the long list of projects demanded by the process and, secondly, there was no mechanism at the top to ensure line ministries recognised priorities that were expressed in lower tier plans.

The 1980s ended with some uncertainty in rural planning. The dominance of the agriculture sector in rural planning had largely ended with the emergence of development planning led by economic and physical planning agencies. Although land use planning had become a major activity and was to remain so for another decade, integrated rural development areas were abandoned in the mid-80s. On the other hand, development planning, and the command planning system more generally, were also rapidly losing energy and the necessary public resources to keep them relevant.

2.5 The 1990s

The 1990s were a decade of major change in Zimbabwe. The primary change, which underpinned most events, was the abandonment of the socialist command economy in favour of a liberalised market-led economy. This placed the private sector in a more prominent position and, by the same token, reduced the role of the public sector. Planning had to adjust to these new forces and to reconfigure.

The failure of development planning to provide an integrated and participatory planning system, responsive to peoples needs and priorities, led to the growth of a number of new planning initiatives. Physical planning, seeking to shrug off a role it did not really desire in development planning, initiated rural master plans. These plans apply to the whole of an rural district council (RDC) area and are intended as long-term, comprehensive strategic plans to guide development. In the environment field, the issue of environmental sustainability and the need to implement Local Agenda 21 led to new forms of environmental planning involving environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for all new developments and district environmental action plans in selected communal areas. Water planning was revived with the creation of seven new Catchment Council areas and numerous sub-catchment areas and river board areas. Not to be outdone, both the Department National Parks and Wildlife Management and the Forestry Commission commenced new plans of their own. These new initiatives are described and analysed in more detail in the next chapter.

One of the major consequences of the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) was a significant reduction in government spending, increased inflation and rising unemployment. Together, these factors led to an increase in poverty, not least in the already poor rural areas. Poverty alleviation, therefore, became a central goal of all government programmes as well as the donor and NGO sector, whose role and work significantly increased in the 1990s. In order to meet the challenge of rising poverty and declining services there was a significant rise in the diversity and number of rural development programmes, which is also described in the next chapter.

The 1990s also witnessed a growing drive to decentralise governance. This had many strands and motives but officially the central purpose was to devolve power and function away from central government to local government and the RDCs. In order to prepare the RDCs for their increased role, a major capacity-building programme was commenced in 1996.

Another major change in the 1990s was the general recognition that the approach to planning must encompass notions of community participation and ownership, local decision-making and have a dynamic, process orientation to plan-making. However, whilst these ideas have become the new mantra for all planning agencies it is not yet clear how they relate to the different local, district, provincial and national levels and structures of government.

The next chapter looks at the context for rural planning in Zimbabwe, Chapters 4 and 5 identify the main features of rural planning in Zimbabwe today, following on from this discussion of its evolving history. Chapter 6 analyses the issues and problems that flow from this situation.

PART 2

RURAL PLANNING IN ZIMBABWE: THE CURRENT PICTURE

CHAPTER 3

THE CONTEXT FOR RURAL PLANNING

3.1 The rural economy

The rural economy of Zimbabwe is strongly influenced by ecology, land tenure and use, population density and land distribution. These factors are discussed below before examining the key elements of the rural economy such as agriculture and drought, rural service provision, off-farm economic activities and rural-urban linkages.

3.1.1 Natural Regions

Zimbabwe is divided into five natural regions on the basis of rainfall and other climatic factors. (see Figure 2). The types and value of farm output varies significantly among these five natural regions. Natural Regions I and II are the intensive cropping zones, while IV and V are suitable for extensive livestock farming. Land use in Zimbabwe varies according to the diverse natural and technological conditions necessary for production in the agriculture, forestry, wildlife and tourism sectors.

3.1.2 Land classification, tenure and use

Rural land in Zimbabwe is divided into seven main types on the basis of land tenure and /or use:

1. *Large-scale commercial farming land:* Land previously occupied exclusively by white commercial farmers which has continued post-independence to be cultivated on a large-scale commercial basis. The land is held under freehold title.

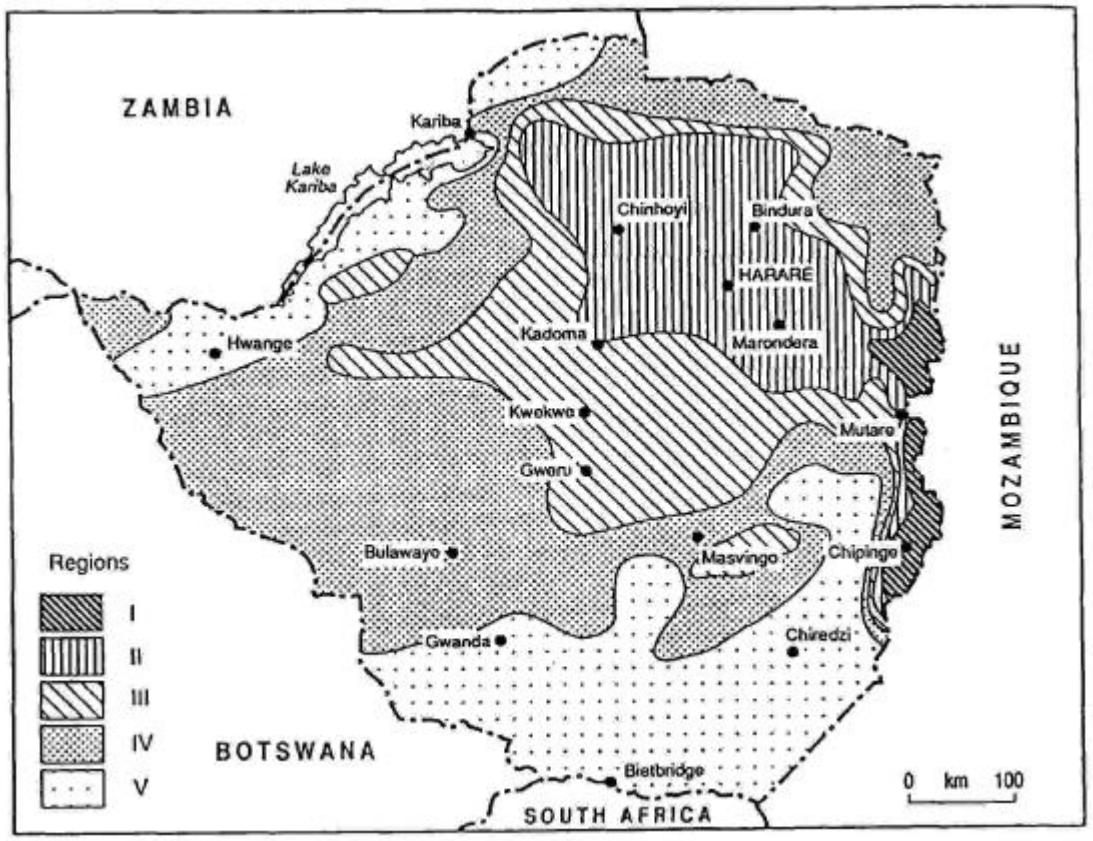
2. *Small-scale commercial farming land:* Former African Purchase areas which were sub-divided prior to independence for settlement by small-scale African commercial farmers. The land is held under freehold title.

3. *Communal areas:* These areas were known before independence as Native Reserves or (after 1965) as Tribal Trust Lands (TTL's). They were set aside by the colonial government for Africans under a succession of Land Apportionment Acts. The ultimate title on communal land is held by the State, but rights to reside and cultivate are derived from traditional custom and practice. Legally the rural district councils have the power over new land allocations but, in practice, traditional leaders play an important role. Communal areas are used for subsistence and small-scale farming.

4. *Resettlement areas:* These are former large-scale commercial farming areas that have been taken over by the government to resettle people from the overcrowded communal areas. Settlers have very poor security of tenure and occupy the land on the basis of permits. There are plans to replace such a system with a more secure lease arrangement.

5. *Government estates:* The Government, through the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA), operates 18 agricultural estates. Many of these have irrigation and ranching schemes. Most ARDA estates are managed on the basis of smallholders or plot-

Figure 2: Map of regions in Zimbabwe



Region	Areal extent (million ha)	% of total	Description
I	0.62	1.6	*Specialised and diversified farming*: High annual rainfall (> 1000mm). Temperature <15°C. Suitable for dairying, forestry, tea, coffee, fruits, maize, beef ranching.
II	7.31	18.8	*Intensive farming:* Annual rainfall 750-1000mm. Ideal for rainfed maize and tobacco, beef, cotton, winter-wheat and vegetables.
III	6.85	17.6	*Semi-intensive farming:* Annual rainfall 650-800mm, mostly as infrequent heavy storms. Severe mid-season dry spells. Marginal for maize, tobacco and cotton. Favours livestock production with fodder. Requires good management to retain moisture during growing season.
IV	12.84	33.0	*Semi-extensive farming*: Annual rainfall 450-650mm, subject to seasonal droughts and severe dry spells during the rainy season. Found in hot, low-lying land. Marginal for rainfed maize. Ideal for drought-resistant fodder crops.
V	11.28	29.0	*Extensive farming*: Annual rainfall < 450mm and too low and erratic for most crops. Very hot, low-lying region. Suitable for animal husbandry with drought-resistant fodder crops under irrigation. Below the Zambezi escarpment, this region is infested with tsetse fly.

holders who occupy the land on the basis of permits. The government also owns a large number of farms, which they have acquired or purchased. These are leased to individuals on varying conditions and time frames.

6. *Forest areas:* These are forest reserves, which are State land administered by the government through the Forestry Commission. Forest areas include both indigenous forest areas (retained largely as areas of bio-diversity) and/or water catchment protection areas and plantation areas (used as commercial forests). The indigenous forest areas are becoming increasingly used for tourist ventures, although some areas have become extensively and illegally settled.

7. *Wildlife areas:* These are also State land areas set aside as national parks or safari areas for the preservation of wildlife and tourism development. They are administered by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management on behalf of the National Parks Board.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the total land area by the main land use types.

Table 1: Distribution of land by land use type

Type of Land Tenure/Use	% of Total Land (1997)
Large-Scale Commercial Sector	30.5
Small-Scale Commercial Sector	3.5
Resettlement	9.10
Communal Areas	41.4
State Farms	0.3
Other (National Parks/Urban)	15.2

Source: National Land Policy Framework Discussion Paper, 1998 p.14

3.1.3 Population density and land distribution

The most obvious problem of rural development in Zimbabwe is the unequal distribution of land which, in turn, has resulted in very high population densities in the communal areas. Approximately 67% of the population live in rural areas and about 57% in the communal areas. The problem is aggravated by the fact that 74% of the communal land lies in natural regions IV and V which are marginal agricultural areas. More than 85 % of households are located in communal areas in natural regions III and IV (ICES 1995/96). Most of the land in high potential natural regions I and II is commercial farmland (see Table 2).

The unequal distribution of land has resulted in the over-utilisation and environmental degradation of communal land due to overcrowding on poor agricultural land. This contrasts starkly with the under-utilisation of agricultural potential in large-scale commercial farming areas.

Table 2: Distribution of land by natural region and land use.

Natural Region	Large-scale Commercial Farms	Small-scale Commercial Farms	Communal Areas	Resettlement Areas	Total
Region I	54.0	1.9	36.0	8.0	100
Region II	63.9	3.9	22.0	10.2	100
Region III	34.8	6.3	40.8	18.0	100
Region IV	22.0	4.3	66.4	7.3	100
Region V	31.1	1.2	59.9	7.8	100

Source: Zimbabwe Report of the Commission of inquiry into appropriate agricultural land tenure systems. October 1994.

3.1.4 Agriculture and drought

Agricultural production accounts for approximately 18% of GDP and employs about 27% of the labour force, excluding those involved on a subsistence or self-employed basis. Table 3 indicates the main crops marketed by volume from 1990/91 to 1997/98.

Agriculture in Zimbabwe is highly dependent on rainfall (the impact of drought in 1992/93 and 1995/96 are obvious in the figures above). Most of the communal and resettlement areas depend entirely on rainfall for crop production. Large-scale farms often have some access to irrigation facilities, although this is limited. The rural economy, is therefore, highly vulnerable to drought.

Land quality, rainfall and access to irrigation make commercial farms more productive than communal and resettlement areas, and less prone to droughts. The maize yields on commercial farms, for example, are more than double those from resettlement and communal farms. This reflects the better-quality soils and higher productive potential of small-scale commercial farms and large-scale commercial farming areas. Droughts have long-term negative affect on rural livelihoods - affecting livestock, incomes and expenditures, especially in communal and resettlement areas (Poverty in Zimbabwe, CSO, 1998, p12).

Most of the marketed crops, livestock and associated products are still produced by large-scale commercial farmers, but there has been a major increase in marketed production by communal farmers since independence, primarily due to improvements in infrastructure and support services. There are approximately five million cattle, 400,000 sheep, 250,000 pigs and five million goats. Over two-thirds of all livestock is located in communal areas and shortage of land for grazing is a major problem. The majority of production of meat and milk sold continues to come from large-scale farming areas, although sales have increased from communal farmers in recent years.

For a number of years, Zimbabwe has been self-sufficient in food, but lack of a clear and co-ordinated agricultural policy and strategy for food reserves has led to the need, in recent years, to import food at a high cost in times of drought. There is a need for a change in policy to ensure greater food security in times of acute shortages.

Table 3: Volume of crop sales to/through marketing authorities (tonnes)

Intake Year	Maize	Groundnuts (unshelled)	Sorghum	Soya Beans	Coffee	Wheat	Cotton	Flue-cured tobacco	Burley tobacco	Sunflower
1990/91	779 203	17 958	5 660	102 228	13 569	322 931	183 347	133 866	5 893	43 805
1991/92	605 853	14 852	984	111 471	12 091	259 321	200 168	170 702	7 893	51 557
1992/93	12 615	210	17	30 622	4 995	56 927	59 893	200 553	10 139	9 915
1993/94	1 349 916	709	4 456	3 225	55	276 391	204 951	218 371	16 790	45 243
1994/95	1 171 032	2 328	493	412	567	203 279	178920	169 218	8 553	29 157
1995/96	67 547	2 690	43	47	103	731	84 286	198 753	10 216	8 169
1996/97	932 162	1 479	3 874	142	35	48 874	297 168	201 535	6 081	17 155
1997/98	300 632	25 491	1 343	157	29	20 590	313 106	187 261	4 860	8 814

Source: Quarterly Digest of Statistics, CSO June 1998, p.31.

3.1.5 Other economic activity and employment

Other economic activities in rural areas include agro-based industries, small-scale mining, forestry, wildlife management and tourism. Whilst these are integral to rural lives, it is not possible to go into detail here as this would require a report in its own right. The general picture indicates a number of community-based activities happening in rural areas such as the Communal Areas Action Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE), shared forest management, and micro economic projects.

3.1.6 Services and infrastructure

The most important infrastructure and services required in rural areas are roads, water supplies, agricultural marketing facilities, health services and education.

From 1980 to1990, there was a huge increase in services and infrastructure in communal areas in line with the government's policy to redress the imbalance inherited from the colonial era. This included a specific effort to develop district centres and growth points in the communal areas in an effort to ensure greater access to markets and employment for the majority of the rural poor.

From 1990 to 1999, under the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP), public spending was dramatically reduced and greater emphasis was placed on recouping the costs of service provision through user charges.

3.1.7 Rural-urban linkages

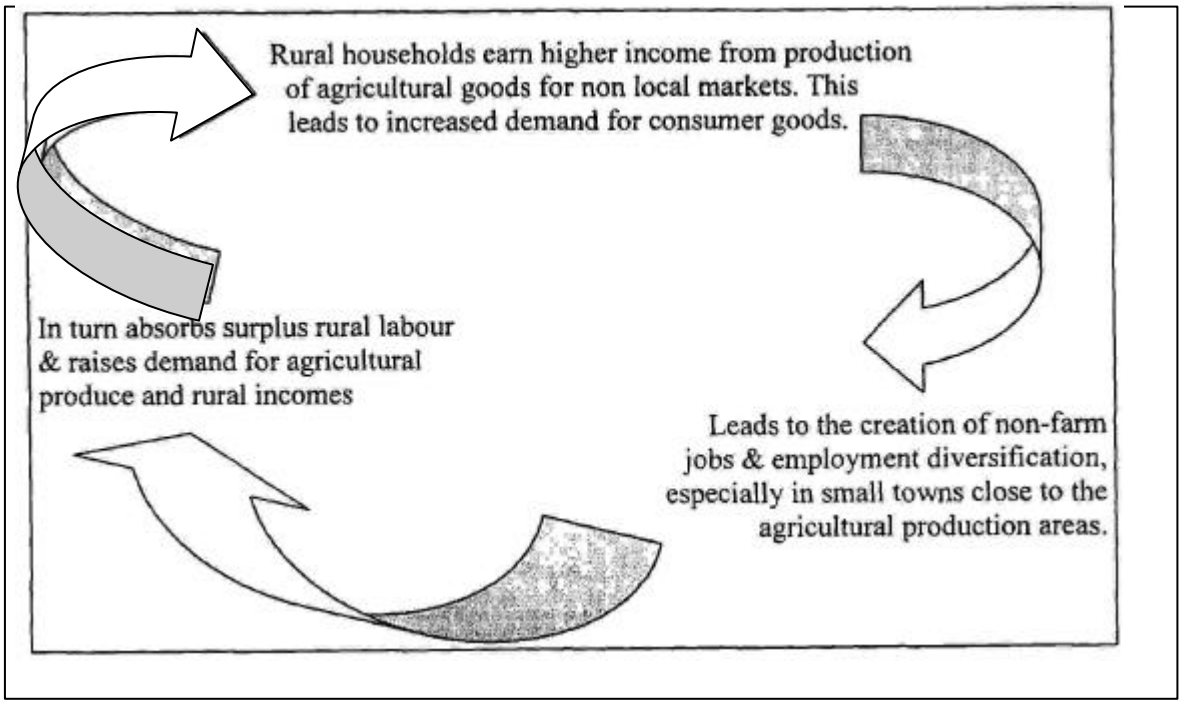
The traditional dichotomy between 'rural' and 'urban' development theory has underplayed the significance of the rural-urban relationship. The rural and urban economies are intrinsically linked in two main ways. Firstly, there are linkages across space, such as people, money and information. Secondly, there are 'sectoral interactions' whereby activities classified as rural take place in urban areas (e.g. urban agriculture) and activities classified as urban (e.g. manufacturing and services) take place in rural areas.

The rural-urban linkages across space and sector were distorted by colonial policy. The creation of 'native reserves' (later known as tribal trust lands and post-1980 as communal areas) created labour pools in poor areas of the countryside to serve the interests of the white settler economy. Only the white large-scale farming areas had access to rural markets and the majority of development during the colonial period concentrated on the large urban centres. Non-agricultural activity in the communal areas has been limited by a lack of assets and a lack of access to credit and markets. This colonial legacy has still not been overcome.

Colonial policy created a migratory labour force whereby large numbers of men left the rural areas to work in the cities, on white-owned farms, and on mines in Zimbabwe and South Africa. This created a history of workers sending remittances back to rural areas to help sustain their families who remained behind.

This relationship with urban areas has continued and the positive elements of these linkages can be summed up in the 'virtuous circle' model (Figure 3).

Figure 3 The Virtuous Circle Model – Rural Urban Linkages
(Source: Tacoli 1098)



However, rural-urban linkages are not simple or necessarily positive. In many communal areas, this migration of labour resulted in those household members who remained in the rural areas having little decision-making power over the management of local resources, as control remained with the migrants. This is particularly the case for women (although other factors play an important role such as gender attitudes, division of labour, etc.).

Since independence, the urban population has doubled (from 2 to 4 million). Approximately half of this is due to urban-rural migration; the other half can be attributed to natural increase. Although there is a pull towards urban centres, this does not reflect the increasing reliance of urban dwellers on rural areas. Since the introduction of the economic structural adjustment programme in 1991, there has been increased job insecurity in urban areas and a huge increase in prices. This has made it more difficult for urban dwellers to support rural relatives and, in many cases, the balance has swung in favour of reverse support: rural to urban. Increasingly, urban children are sent to rural relatives to live, as school fees are cheaper in rural areas. Urban relatives may rely on selling produce grown in rural areas to survive and, in some instances, where workers are retrenched, they may return to rural areas. The complex nature of these relationships makes it difficult to make generalisations. However, the important point is that the rural/urban linkages in Zimbabwe remain strong but are subject to change, depending upon the changing fortunes of rural and urban economies. Rural planning continues to operate without appropriate understanding of these dynamics, although there is a growing recognition of the issue.

3.2 The administrative context

This section outlines the main administrative machinery currently operating in Zimbabwe. It is not an exhaustive picture but should be sufficient for the reader to understand how government operates, with special reference to rural planning.

3.2.1 National level

Under the central government framework, there is no one leading co-ordinating agency for rural development and rural planning. Hence, the system comprises many ministries, each with its own functions and perspectives. There is a Cabinet Committee on Rural Development but it has a very broad remit and seems to act to sort out problems between potentially competing ministries. Two ministries, by the nature of their remits, have overarching roles: the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing (MLGNH) and the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development (MRRWD). The MLGNH co-ordinates and guides local government and supports capacity building for the RDCs. This ministry is houses the Department of Physical Planning (DPP). The MRRWD was created in 1997 and has important implementation powers in rural areas through the District Development Fund (DDF). It also now operates a new fund, the Rural Development Fund (RDF). Within this new ministry, the Department of Water Development (DWD) operates the new system of water catchment planning. The Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (MLA) is clearly focused on rural areas and includes the Department of Agriculture and Extension (Agritex) which undertakes land-use planning. In the economic field, the Ntaional Economic Planning Commission (NEPC) is located in the Office of the President and takes the lead on development planning and the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP). The Ministry of Mines, Environment and Tourism (MMET) also has a powerful rural focus and has its remit includes responsibility for three powerful departments: National Parks and Wildlife Management, Natural Resources and the Forestry Commission. Each of these agencies is operates important planning systems.

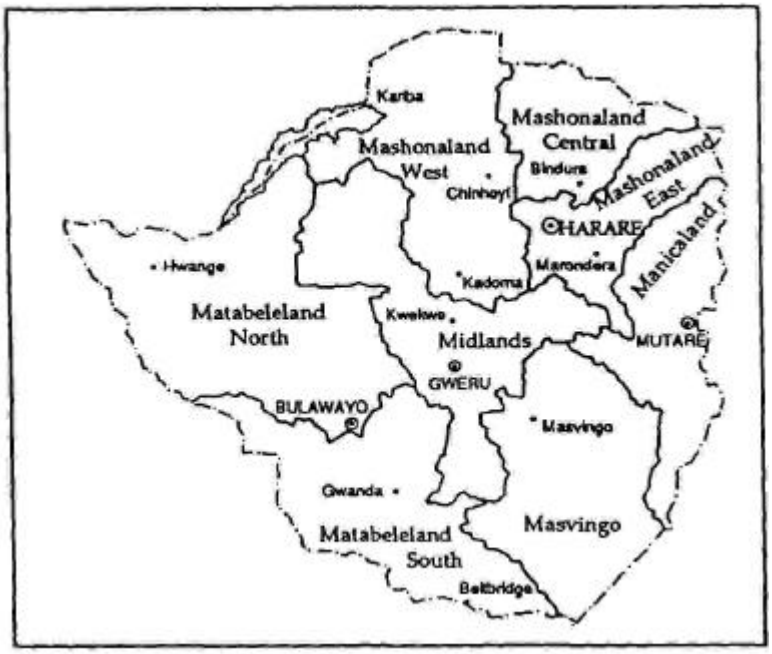
3.2.2 Provincial level

Zimbabwe is divided into eight administrative provinces (see Figure 4). Each province has a Provincial Governor and Resident Minister as well as a Provincial Administrator (PA). The PA co-ordinates the civil service in a province, but is also part of the MLGNH. A Provincial Council (PC) brings together the political leadership of the province including the members of parliament (MPs) and the chairs of the rural district councils (RDCs) and mayors of urban councils. The PC is serviced by a Provincial Development Committee (PDC) which comprises the heads of government at provincial level and chaired by the PA. The PDC has several sub-committees.

3.2.3 District level

There are 57 RDCs in the country. These bodies are run by an elected council and staff headed by chief executive officers (CEOs). The CEO is chosen by the council, subject to ratification by the MLGNH. The Council has several sub-committees. The key co-ordinating mechanism at district level is the Rural District Development Committee (RDDC).This is a committee of the RDC but also includes all other stakeholders in the district, including central government officers, NGOs, parastatals and the private sector. In a continuing anomaly, despite being a committee of the RDC, the RDDC, is chaired by the most senior government official in the district, the District Administrator (DA).

Figure 4: Map of administrative provinces in Zimbabwe



3.2.4 Sub-district level

A Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) was passed in 1998 which sought to make the old Ward and Village Development Committees (WADCOs and VIDCOs) elected committees of new structures - Ward and Village Assemblies (led by traditional leaders). The functions of the VIDCO remained as described in the Rural District Councils Act and those of the WADCO, previously undefined, were set out in the new LTA. However, the provisions of the LTA had not been implemented by November 2000 due to a lack of resources.

3.3 The National Policy context

3.3.1 The overall vision for rural development in Zimbabwe

There is no clear, co-ordinated national rural development strategy for Zimbabwe. Whilst there are several different policy strands which can be said to influence rural development these have not resulted in an overall integrated and holistic rural development strategy. This has resulted in a sector-led approach to rural development, which has led to gaps and overlaps in activities. The lack of a co-ordinated rural development strategy has also led to an *ad hoc* gender policy in rural areas.

The lack of a long-term vision for Zimbabwe led to the launch of the Vision 2020 process in 1996. Following a number of consultative exercises, a broad national vision was agreed. This placed a heavy emphasis on creating an industrialised economy. But the vision process has

still not been completed, but it could have far-reaching implications for a long-term strategy for rural areas.

The current medium-term national plan is the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST). This is the second five-year plan of the reform programme launched as the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP). The objectives and strategy of ZIMPREST are set out below in Figure 5. From this, it can be seen that there is no special focus on rural development, although poverty alleviation, which is heavily concentrated in the rural areas, is seen as one of the key objectives. In addition, four policy areas can be seen to have a special relevance to the context of rural development:

- Poverty Alleviation;
- Decentralisation;
- Land Reform;
- Environment (Agenda 21).

The general objective of poverty alleviation and the three key policy areas are discussed below.

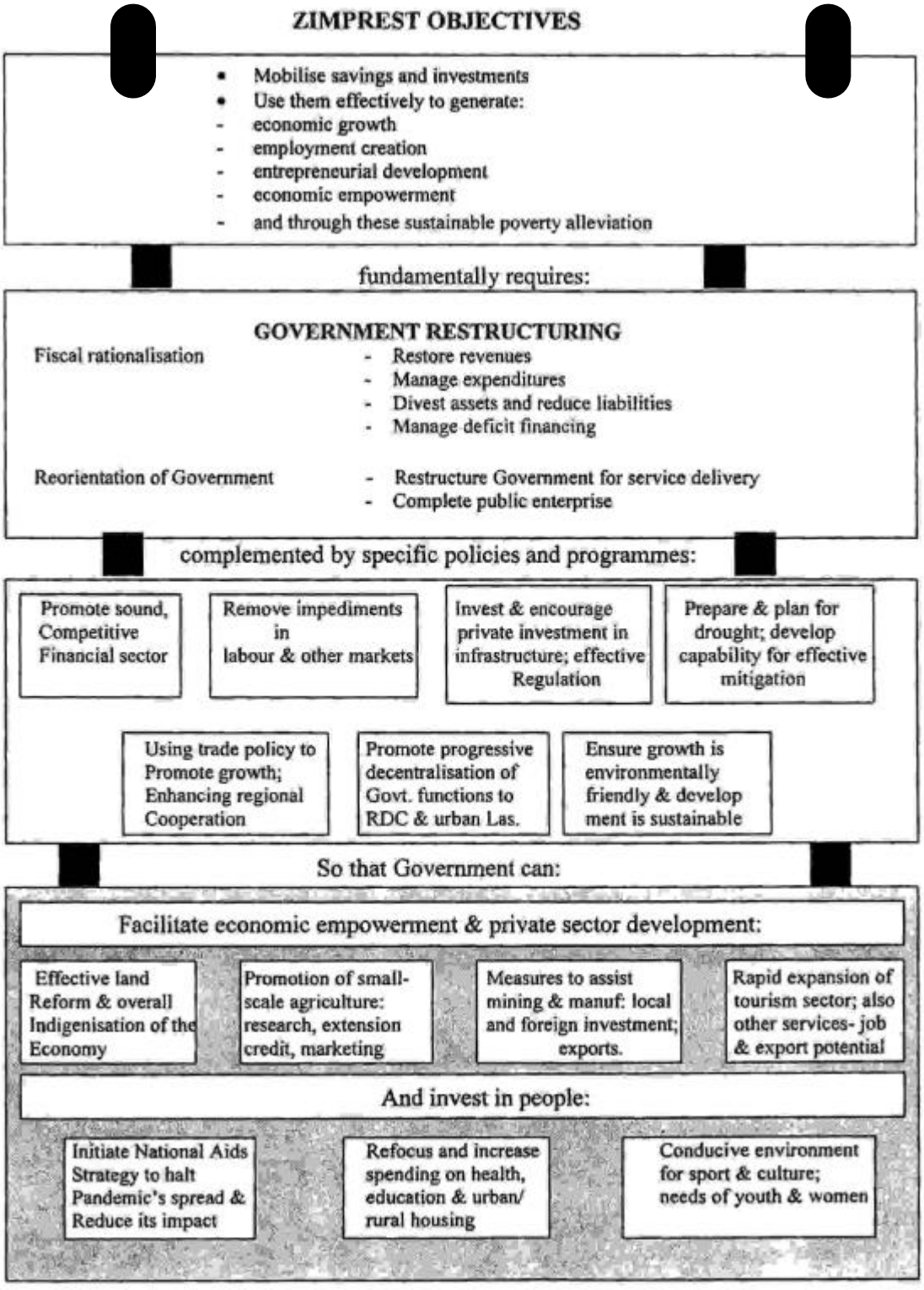
3.3.2 Poverty alleviation

From 1980 to 1990, government funding was re-orientated to the communal areas and the country achieved unprecedented success in the fields of health and education. With the onset of ESAP in 1991, the government was faced with a new challenge to formulate poverty reduction strategies as public expenditure was decreased and a free market economy adopted.

The government attempted to protect the poor and vulnerable groups from the negative impacts of the economic structural adjustment programme by establishing the Social Dimensions of Adjustment Programme (SDA). The mechanism for disbursing SDA funds was the Social Development Fund (SDF) under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MPSLSW). However, the was too narrow in its approach and under-resourced. As a result, the donor community (co-ordinated by the World Bank and UNDP) and the MPSLSW developed an action plan. The Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP) was launched in 1994 and included reform of the SDF and more systematic efforts to monitor and address poverty analysis. It created only one significant new initiative, but brought together existing activities under the poverty alleviation umbrella.

The most notable initiative was the introduction of the Community Action Project (CAP) and introduction of PAAP officers at district level. The main objective of CAP is to "strengthen the capacity of poor communities to organise themselves and to identify, plan and implement activities which will provide sustainable improvements in well-being for community member, particularly those who are most disadvantaged' (CAP, Assessment Studies, PlanAfric 1996, p. 7). PAAP officers have been established in 12 districts to co-ordinate CAP activities. Community proposals are received by rural district councils from villages and it is the responsibility of the district PAAP officer and rural district development committee (RDDC) to identify key projects. The funds for these projects are given directly to the communities with the district PAAP officer remaining as a co-signatory on the community account to help ensure transparency. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these projects on rural livelihoods.

Figure 5: ZIMPREST objectives and strategy



3.3.3 Decentralisation

Decentralisation as a major strategic policy thrust of government stems mainly from the creation of rural district councils (RDCs) in 1993 and the decision to transfer powers and functions from central government to the RDCs. However, decentralisation reforms have a longer history and can be seen to have commenced in 1980, not so much as part of an overall policy, but more as a reaction to specific problems. The three main sources of decentralisation legislation have been implemented to redress inherited imbalances and to improve participation in Zimbabwe.

1. Enactment of District Councils Act 1980
2. Decentralised policy initiated by the document popularly known and the 'First Prime Minister's Directive 1984' and 'Second Prime Minister's Directive 1985' and the Provincial Councils Act 1985.
3. Amalgamation of rural councils (previously representing white large-sacle farming areas) and district councils (previously representing poor African farmers) in the 1988 Rural District Council Act.

At independence there was an urgent need to restructure local government. There was a dual system of governance with rural councils representing white large-scale farming areas and weak, discredited African councils representing poor communal areas. The 1980 Act replaced the 220 African councils with 55 newly elected district councils. However, it did nothing about the rural councils, which were to remain in power for a further 13 years.

The District Councils Act decentralised more power to districts bu was viewed by some as an attempt to re-centralise power through the then Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD), especially as the district councils were headed by the district administrator - an employee of the MLGRUD.

The Prime Minister's Directives of 1984 and 1985 and the Provincial Councils Administrative Act 1985 achieved a variety of reforms. Eight provincial governors were appointed of ministerial standing. Their functions were to co-ordinate and implement development planning in their respective provinces. Secondly, these reforms created village and ward development committees (VIDCOs and WADCOs). Thirdly, district and provincial development committees were established, providing the structure for central government field administrators and those of local authorities to co-operate, co-ordinate and assist one another along a parallel spectrum. Finally, the reforms introduced five-year and annual development plans at the sub-national levels. It was anticipated and expected that development committees from village to provincial level would input their projects and priorities into the national development planning system. This system is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

The last major decentralisation reform to be implemented was the Rural District Councils Act 1988. It was implemented in 1993 through a process of amalgamation of rural and district councils, thus finally ending the dual system of rural local government.

The First Schedule of the Rural District Councils Act permits RDCs to undertake up to 64 separate functions. However, central government departments currently undertake most of these functions. The process of decentralising these functions to the RDC has always been recognised as difficult. A number of studies were undertaken in the 1990s under the auspices of the Forum for Rural Development within MLGRUD. These studies looked at decentralising functions from key ministries (roads, education, health and finance). Unfortunately these never culminated in the adoption of a clear decentralisation programme, although the cabinet did agree on the transfer of some central government activities (social welfare, education, health and roads) and an increasing number of ministries now recognise

the growing role of RDCs and work closely with them or direct certain programmes through them.

Recently, a major component of the decentralisation programme has been the Rural District Council Capacity Building Project (RDCCBP), aimed at increasing the human, institutional and capital capacity of newly formed RDCs. The various strands of this programme and its success to date are discussed in Chapter 4

In its 5 year plan (ZIMPREST 1996-2000 p.16), the government reiterated its commitment to the decentralisation of functions and financing of RDCs with proper accountability:

> "Over the ZIMPREST period, government is giving full support to the RDC Capacity-Building Programme, the objective of which is to develop the capacity of RDCs to plan, implement and manage their own development programmes and to provide and maintain essential services for the rural population."

One important factor impelling government to greater emphasis on decentralisation has been the increasing financial problems besetting government and pressures from the IMF and World Bank to reduce central government expenditure. This pressure has led some ministries to see decentralisation as a way of dumping difficult and expensive service operations on the RDCs without concomitant financial and manpower resources. A detailed implementation programme for the decentralisation of powers, finance and other resources to the RDCs is required that is gradual and tailored to individual RDC's capacities. Without this, there is a danger that RDC's will become over-burdened and under-resourced and the impact of rural development initiatives will be severely hampered.

3.3.4 Land reform and resettlement

The land issue has been a dominant factor in the history of Zimbabwe ever since the colonial settlers established their power through conquest over one hundred years ago. In a series of steps, the colonial regime established their own forms of tenure, expropriated the best quality land for white commercial farmers and restricted and resettled the black African peasant farmers into marginal areas. The administration of land and its planning were undertaken through centralised government mechanisms that reflected the power and interests of the white minority.

The resultant inequities and injustices helped to fuel a rising tide of nationalist sentiment that culminated in the second *chimurenga* of 1962-1979. That struggle for independence over a minority colonialist regime was fought largely on the twin demands of democracy for all and tackling the land question.

The birth of independent Zimbabwe in 1980 was a political settlement achieved through negotiation at Lancaster House, London. In the interests of reconciliation and as a reflection of the balance of forces, the new regime was forced to accept that there would be no compulsory acquisition of commercial farming land for ten years. Thus, from 1980 to 1990, Zimbabwe was only able to tackle the land question through agreement and to acquire farms on the basis of willing seller-willing buyer arrangements.

After the first 10 ten years and in response to the long-standing inequities in land distribution, the government amended the constitution in 1990 to remove restrictions on acquiring farmland. A new national land policy was also agreed in 1990, setting new targets for land acquisition and land resettlement, and announcing a number of policy measures aimed at increasing the government's ability to acquire land. The Land Acquisition Act of 1992 flowed

from this policy position. In 1993 the government appointed a commission of enquiry into appropriate agricultural land tenure systems (The Land Tenure Commission) which reported in 1994. Several of the recommendations contained in the land tenure report are currently being implemented. However, there remain a number of unresolved issues.

The government produced a new policy statement in 1996 focussing on guiding principles for a new phase of resettlement. The following year, the government further restructured its ministries and created a new Ministry of Lands and Agriculture. In the same year, national and provincial Land Acquisition Committees were established to identify commercial farms suitable for acquisition under the Land Acquisition Act. In 1997 1,471 farms were identified and later, as a result of reassessment, the number was modified. After this there arose a growing sense of impatience with the slow progress of new resettlement initiatives. Some groups took to direct action and moved on to commercial farms, demanding to be resettled there immediately. This new social tension highlighted the central importance of land reform in Zimbabwean society today. In 1998-99, there was a reduction of designated farms to 841, further reduced to 321 following the government's failure to contest in time the objections to the acquisition of 520 farms. Government statements prior to the 2000 election process re-affirmed its commitment to transparency and willingness to abide by existing compensation regulations and this helped to calm the fears of key stakeholders in the process, such as donors and the commercial farming sector. But during the election period in 2000, there was widespread occupation of white-owned farms, fanned by hard-line rhetoric from the President, and tensions reached unprecedented levels.

The land question is multifaceted and complex. Land redistribution is a pressing matter, but so too is the issue of land tenure, land use and planning and land administration. Each of these main land issues has repercussions on the others. It is in this regard that a comprehensive land policy for Zimbabwe is now viewed as a priority. Many of the stakeholders involved in the land question have stressed the need to undertake the new land redistribution programme in a transparent and accountable manner. One important ingredient that will assist such processes is the adoption of a national land policy based on a consultative process. In 1999, a comprehensive land policy document with clear guiding principles was being prepared, which promised to provide the framework and rationale for specific land initiatives and programmes. This never reached cabinet but was broadly accepted at national workshops. In order to achieve national strategic objectives in land and related matters, it is important to ensure that there is complementarity and consistency in the separate parts of any land reform programme. There are a number of laws in Zimbabwe related to land that could, with benefit, be rationalised and reviewed. A draft, comprehensive land policy document has been prepared to assist in that process (Shivji et al., 1998).

3.3.5 Environment

The gathering momentum behind the concept of sustainable development and according a high priority to environmental issues came to the fore as a result of the 1992 Earth Summit Conference in Rio de Janeiro, organised by the United Nations. One of the agreements at Rio was that all nations should establish the environmental issue as a high priority and that environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and participatory processes should be adopted in regard to all significant development projects. This approach was called Local Agenda 21 and Zimbabwe became a signatory to this shortly after the Rio summit.

Since that time, Zimbabwe has moved to create a major new piece of legislation on the environment. The Environmental Management Bill was due to become law in 1999. It would establish the requirement for EIAs and a new process of environmental planning, which is detailed in the next chapter.

Until the new Bill becomes law and work is concluded on a new National Environmental Action Plan, the prevailing national strategy on the environment remains the National Conservation Strategy (1987). However, the Ministry of Mines, Environment and Tourism (MMET) has produced environmental impact assessment guidelines (1997) and also a ministerial mission statement, Strategic Directions (1996).

3.4 Conclusion

Over 6 million of Zimbabwe's current population of 11 million live in marginal rural lands without fertile soils and reliable rainfall. Access to natural resources, including water rights has been largely denied to this population. On the other hand, 4,500 mainly white, large-scale farmers dominate Zimbabwe's largely agrarian economy. Together with trans-national capital, white agrarian interests control key sectors such as tourism, forestry, commodity exports and the narrow agro-industrial complex underlying its urban political economy. This economic structure undermines the growth of rural livelihoods. Over 60% of the rural people are poor (Poverty Assessment Study Survey, 1997) and cannot afford basic health and educational services. Zimbabwe's human capital is thus constrained by an inefficient economic structure, which under-utilises its people and degrades quality of lives. The growth of poverty, unemployment and income disparities in the face of underutilisation of substantial parts of Zimbabwe's land and natural resources is the main factor facing rural development and rural planning in Zimbabwe today. (Moyo, 1998)

CHAPTER 4

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND PLANNING SYSTEMS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Definitions

This chapter attempts to paint a picture of rural development and rural planning in Zimbabwe. Initially, we examine rural development programmes and projects and then consider the seven planning systems. The distinction between 'projects', 'programmes', and 'planning systems' (Box 1) is not clean, but it assists in dividing up an enormous topic and clarifying the key issues.

Box 1: Distinctions between 'projects', 'programmes', and 'planning systems'

Rural development projects

Individual projects are seen to operate on a small scale and at grassroots level. They are usually funded through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), church organisations, charitable or relief agencies. Primarily they are implementation-orientated and are usually involve construction and building. Projects often comprise the component parts of rural development programmes.

Rural development programmes

Programmes are defined here as multi-project initiatives which cover more than one district. Programmes are funded by government, rural district councils and NGOs - usually with considerable donor support. They tend to have a longer time-span than projects but, have a similar emphasis on 'doing' rather than 'planning'.

Planning systems

Planning systems are defined for the purpose of this study as emphasising the organisation of activities on a territorial basis. All planning systems produce a spatial plan as one of their key outputs. They provide a framework for programme and project planning. Their approaches vary from spatial integrated planning to sector planning, process planning to blueprint planning.

4.1.2 Programme and project planning

As the definition in Box 1 explains, our focus is rural planning systems that seek to organise a range of activities within defined spatial or territorial areas. This is not to ignore the important planning activity that takes place around rural development programmes and rural projects. Rather it is to try to concentrate on what we consider to be the more complex and challenging aspect of rural planning, namely its capacity to integrate and co-ordinate rural development programmes and projects according to agreed priorities and strategies.

4.1.3 Relationship between rural planning systems and rural development programmes and projects

We distinguish between the lateral activities of programmes and projects which provide resources for building rural livelihoods and the vertical activities of planning systems which try to provide frameworks for such development. The rural planning systems in Zimbabwe are essentially territorial and concerned with integrating activities.

Rural development programmes and projects are undertaken by many different actors. We separate these in four groups: central and local government; national and international NGOs; the private sector; and donors. They all vary in the degree and extent to which they are single or multi-sector in composition.

The planning systems are all operated by government agencies and vary in the degree and extent to which they involve or devolve their activities to rural district councils and communities. There is very little co-ordination between the different planning systems. However, since they all have different scopes and timeframes, there may be opportunities to make them complementary rather than conflicting.

Figure 6 illustrates the relationship between the programmes and projects and planning systems.

The remainder of this chapter describes the details of this diagram, looking first at the rural development and projects component. It then considers the planning systems and finally examines the support aspects. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 provide supporting information.

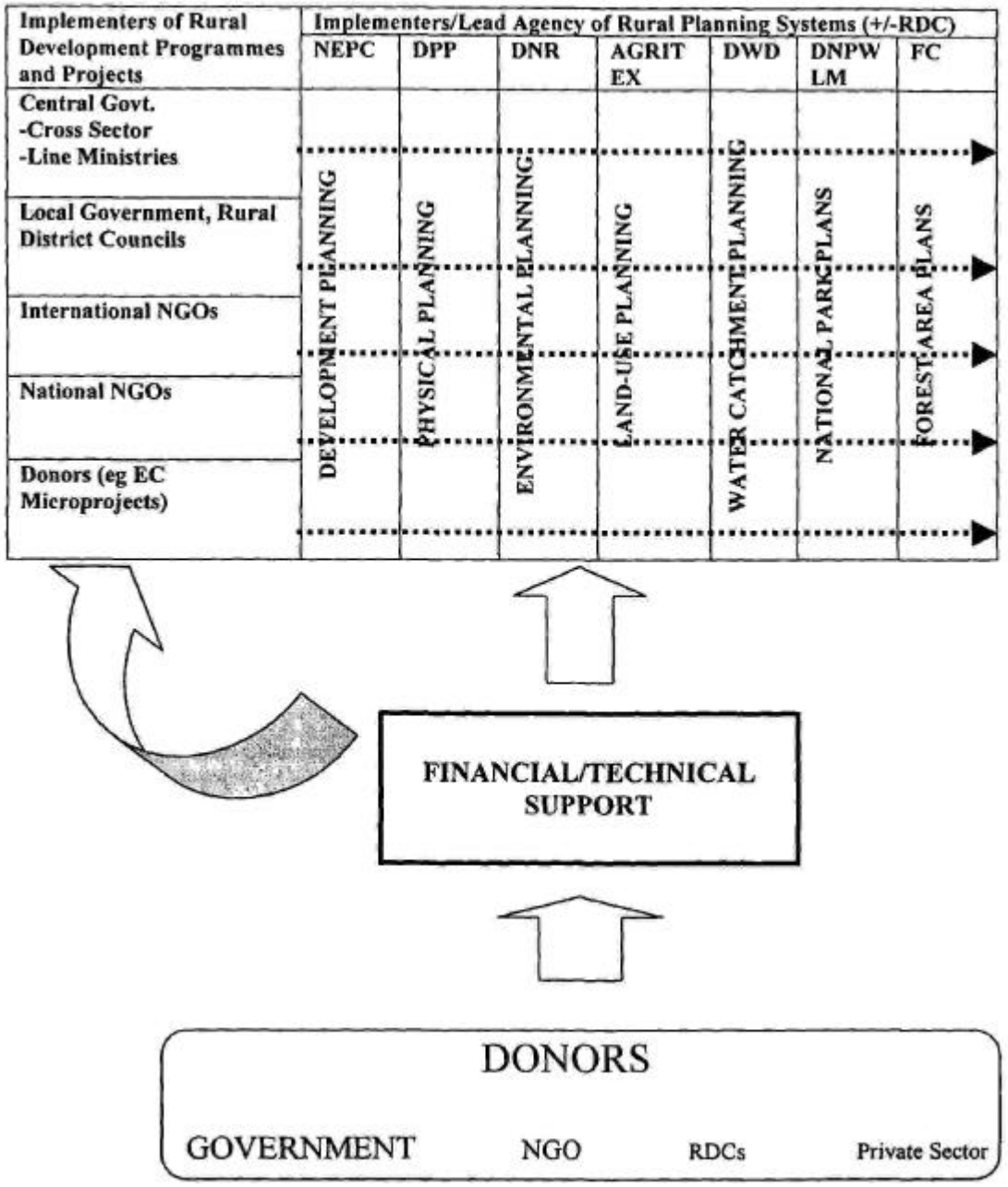
4.2 Rurual development programmes and projects

4.2.1 Rural projects

For the purpose of this study, the numerous projects operating in rural areas are not detailed. The plethora of largely uncoordinated rural development projects in Zimbabwe display a wide variety of approaches to project planning. This makes it impossible to realistically evaluate their combined or individual affect on sustainable rural livelihoods.

However, it is worth mentioning that, within the folds of 'projects', there is a breadth of difference between small projects such as classroom construction, and pilot projects which may be precursors to rural development programmes or to changing approaches to rural planning. Pilot projects often operate in only one district, or in a few wards in one district, but they may hold important lessons for rural planning practice. We have not been able to research such projects but would mention three that we are familiar with: Chivi Food Security Project, Zimuto Wetlands Rehabilitation Project and the Africa Publishing and Development Project in Gokwe. There will, undoubtedly be more.

Figure 6: Relationship between rural planning systems and programmes and projects



4.4.2 Rural Development Programmes

(a) Central government

To paint a true picture of 'rural development' in Zimbabwe, there is a need to detail all development programmes operating within the rural areas - from health and education related programmes to land reform and environmental programmes. All of these programmes are important to rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe and contribute to rural development.

Whilst we welcome such a holistic view of rural development, in this report we limit details of government-led rural development programmes to the following:

- Land and environment
- Land-use and agriculture
- Economic non-farming
- Infrastructure
- Settlement
- Poverty alleviation and drought mitigation
- Institutional support to rural planning.

The details of individual programmes within these sub-headings are provided in Appendix 2, covering: programmes objectives; the geographical scale of the project; lead agency; and donor. We have tried to be as comprehensive as possible. However, limitations in terms of time and resources mean that there will, inevitably, be some omissions, for which we apologise.
The most notable gaps are the large sector government programmes in health and education. These are far-reaching initiatives which merit studies in their own right and, as such, they have been omitted.

We have identified at least 30 government-led rural development programmes. Each programme is usually supported by one or more donors and, in some cases, with assistance from NGOs as well. These large programmes all involve a degree of programme planning. The approach to planning varies from a highly centralised sectoral approach such as the National Roads Programme[1], to a decentralised and integrated approach which can be found, for instance, within the Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme.

The planning process is largely dependent on the donor funding the government programme, but is also significantly affected by the lead government ministry and its approach to rural development. Zimbabwe has tended to follows a top-down approach to planning processes and rural development, despite a change in development thinking towards a more participatory and integrated approach. The language and rhetoric of participatory planning approaches may exist within virtually all-rural development programmes (RDPs), but the degree to which it is applied is often limited in practice.

Government-led programmes are largely sector-based with little dialogue between ministries. However, there is an indication within some RDPs of increased co-operation between line ministries and an indication of a more integrated approach. Increasingly, there is a slow movement towards decentralisation as RDPs channel and co-ordinate their activities through the Rural District Councils.

[1] Note that there is a major reform programme in this sector and a Green Paper spells out significant changes.

(b Local government: the rural district councils (RDCs)

Although the RDC is involved in an increasing range of rural development programmes (RDPs), their lack of financial resources mean that they are unable to offer many independent programmes. RDCs operate road maintenance programmes as well as some limited programme work in education and health and, in some cases, housing in rural centres. Appendix 4 provides a case study on Gwanda RDC.

The remainder of rural development programmes that come through the RDC (in the sense that the RDC manages the finance and planning of such programmes) vary considerably in the degree of external control and ultimate sanction. The district development grants (DDGs) provided to the RDC and local communities under the rural district council capacity-building programme are intended as a tool for learning as well as a means of improving rural livelihoods, and so allows the RDC considerable control. On the other hand, the Rural Development Fund, operated by the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development, provides only a limited role for the RDC.

The move to give increasing responsibility to RDCs for managing rural development programmes is welcome from the perspective of local ownership and district integration, but the burden on RDCs is becoming considerable. This is an issue discussed below in further detail.

(c) International NGOs

There are no current figures for the number of international NGOs operating in Zimbabwe, but the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations estimates there are in excess of 50. Little is known about the overall impact of these NGOs, or indeed how many of them are concerned with rural development. Our estimate is that most are involved in some aspect of rural development and that approximately 20 are fully oriented to RDPs.

Whilst international NGOs need to register on establishing operations in the country, there is no uniform system of registration and no information requirement for renewal of registration. The National Economic Planning Commission make no reference to the role of NGOs in its national planning document and therefore does not incorporate them into the planning process.

Multilateral and bilateral agencies are unlikely to be aware of NGO programmes and bilateral donors tend to be aware only of their own activities involving NGOs (Muir, 1992). Within the international NGO sector, it would seem that there is lack of co-ordination and information-sharing. However, at district level, there is a much greater knowledge of who is doing what than at national level, and many NGOs attend and participate in Rural District Development Committee meetings. Table 4 lists basic details for some of the international NGO involvement in rural development.

(d Local NGOs

There are hundreds of local NGOs operating in Zimbabwe. The exact number is not known (Muir, 1992). Over 800 organisations had registered with the Ministry of Manpower, Planning and Social Welfare in 1990 and several hundred were listed in the last publication of the National Association of NGOs in 1992. There is no up-to-date information which lists the number of NGOs, their areas of activity, the number of people they employ, or income and expenditure information. Local NGOs can be divided into church-based organisations, independent NGOs and politically linked NGOs. These categories can be further divided into NGOs operating in one area only and those working in more than one area. The majority of

local NGOs work in rural development. We have selected the most prominent NGOs and listed them below in Table 5 with the categories used to describe the government-led RDPs.

Table 4: List of main international NGOs active in RDPs in Zimbabwe

Name of NGO	Activities	Locations
Plan International	Rural and Community Development : Schools, clinics, income gen. projects	Nation-wide: especially Mat. North-Tsholotsho Midlands-Kwekwe
World Vision	As above Agricultural development	Nationwide: especially
Lutheran World Federation	Water related programmes Agriculture development	Mat. South- all districts and other provinces
Save the Children UK	Water and sanitation Health and nutritional progs	Nationwide +Mat. North-Binga
Redd Barna- Norwegian	As above	Nationwide
Care International	Food Security	Nationwide
Oxfam UK, USA, Canada	Poverty alleviation, rural development	Nationwide
Netherlands Development Organisation- SNV	Support to planning Dam rehabilitation	Nationwide –especially Mat. South- Beitbridge, Insiza Manicaland- Buhera, Makoni
HIVOS	Water and Sanitation	Nationwide
Danish Development Organisation - MSC	Conservation	Nationwide
ITDG	CBM Small miners	Nationwide – especially Masvingo Province- Chivi
ENDA	Agriculture: small grains promotion, research	Nationwide
Africare	Rural Development, water	Nationwide
IRED	Information, training, capacity building for NGOs	Nationwide
Friedrich Ebert Foundation	Training, agriculture	Nationwide
Konrad Adenauer Foundation	Credit clubs, small business in rural areas	Nationwide
Africa 2000	Environmental issues	Nationwide
IUCN	Sustainable development Natural resource management	Nationwide
Cesvi- Italy	Sustainable development and natural resource management: eco-tourism	Beitbridge, Chiredzi, Chipinge
WWF	Environmental issues: land use planning, conservancy planning	Nationwide –especially Binga, Bulilimamangwe

Table 5: Local NGOs and rural development programmes

Name of NGO	Activity	Location
Land and Environment		
Zimbabwe Environmental Research Organisation (ZERO)	Research and support to regional organisations in environment	Harare-based but undertakes projects countrywide
Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC)	Management of natural resources using indigenous knowledge. Afforestation using indigenous trees	Based in Masvingo but also in Manicaland
Commutech	Technical support to environmental NGOs	Countrywide
Environment 2000	Support to other NGOs and CBOs	Countrywide
Environmental Forum	Environmental awareness etc	Countrywide
ZimTrust	Training, PRAs, support to projects	Provides support to Campfire
CAMPFIRE Association	Training and support to RDCs	Comprising mainly RDCs
Agriculture and land use ***Rural development***		
ORAP	Rural development through building local groups.	Centred upon Matabeleland South with some presence in Midlands
Africa Centre for Holistic Resource management	Integrated approach to rural development based on Savoury's ideas	Pilot project in Hwange
CADEC	Rural development	Countrywide
Manicaland Development Association	Rural development, income generation	Provincial organisation in Manicaland
Mvurimanzi Trust	Water development	Countrywide
Silveira House	Training for rural transformation	Mainly Mashonaland
Economic-non-farming		
OCCZIM	Support to co-ops in variety of projects	Co-operatives focussed
Zimbabwe Project	Small loans and grants to start micro-income generating projects	Countrywide
Self-help Foundation	Support to rural women/savings clubs	Countrywide
Infrastructure		
Christian Care	Small dams. Irrigation schemes	Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands and Matabeleland
Evangelical Fellowship Zim	Small dams etc	Matabeleland
Dabane Trust	Small dams, water workshops	Works mainly in Matabeleland South
Matabeleland Zambezi WaterTrust	Water security to Bulawayo and Matabeleland-pipeline to Zambezi	Regional body covering whole of Matabeleland and all sectors
Give a Dam	Small dams and irrigation schemes linked to catchment conservation	Unique provincial organisation, jointly led by Govt. and UNDP and implemented by NGOs through RDCs
Poverty Alleviation and Drought Mitigation		
African Community Publishing and Devt.Trust (ACPDT)	Working with poor communities to develop self awareness and action	Pilot project in Gokwe
Institutional support to RDCs		
ARDC	Advocacy on behalf of RDCs, co-operation with SIDA and other support agencies, financial and audit services to RDCs etc	All RDCs

NGOs are often guilty of by-passing rural district councils, and this undermines the development planning system. The proliferation's of NGOs makes it very difficult to co-ordinate activities or evaluate the impact of their activities on rural livelihoods. Their planning approaches vary according to the scale and scope of activities and their attitude to development and overall objectives.

Very often, two assumptions are made about NGOs: firstly, that they know their target group and, secondly, that they engage in participatory methods. These assumptions should be treated with caution. Equally, the view that 'NGOs are inconsequential to rural development' is a simplistic and dangerous view. The fact is that, with so little information available, it is not advisable to make generalisations about this sphere of rural development activity.

(e) The private sector

The role of the private sector in rural development is diverse. On the one hand, the private sector acts as an investor and financier to development. This is part of its normal role and is based upon market and profit considerations. On the other hand, some enterprises within the private sector consider that they have a corporate community responsibility role which involves them in donating time, funds and other resources to the community and to rural development. It has not been possible to quantify or evaluate this activity. In general, it is small scale, project-oriented and diverse. In this report we can only identify a few types of activity.

The first type of activity is what may be termed *indirect support to rural development*. This involves joining NGOs or community-based organisations and possibly providing grants or donations to them. This is especially apparent in the environment field. Many enterprises join such bodies as the Environmental Forum of Zimbabwe or regional bodies such as the Zambezi Society or the Matopos Conservation Committee.

The second type, and a growing area of involvement, is in *competitions and sponsorship*. Here, firms act in a dual capacity by marketing themselves and assisting communities. Seed growers, for example, provide comparatively rich prizes for peasant farmers in national competitions.

Thirdly, companies provide *direct support* to rural development. Examples of this are commercial farmers, conservancies and other organisations supporting the building of schools and clinics in rural areas. Other examples are the provision of products or expertise to relieve situations such as drought or natural hazards.

Finally, within the financial sector, there are examples of institutions providing special help in terms of *special loans or other support* to small-scale farmers. Cottco's recent support to peasant cotton growers is a case in point.

(f) Donors

In the itme available for this study, we have managed to identify only one completely donor-led and managed rural development programme in Zimbabwe - the European Community's Micro-Projects Programme (MPP) (there may be others). The MPP is managed through national and regional centres funded and managed under the auspices of the EC. However, this is not to say that the programme ignores the rural district councils (RDCs), or that it does not encourage community ownership. Communities have to make a significant contribution to this scheme. But neither they nor the RDC receive and manage the financial resources. The project's host department is the Agricultural and Rural Development Authorty (ARDA) in the Ministry of Agriculture.

A large number of donors fund rural development programmes in Zimbabwe. Virtually all donor funds are channelled through government-led programmes (detailed in Appendix 2). It has not been possible to detail exactly what each donor is doing, but we have attempted to indicate key donor interests and rural development programmes and in Appendix 3.

4.2 Rural planning systems

In the introduction to this chapter, it was pointed out that seven separate planning systems operate in Zimbabwe's rural areas. By planning systems is meant a process of establishing through study and analysis a set of policies and actions to achieve agreed goals, objectives and strategies in a given spatial area. The outputs of a planning system are plans, which may include written reports, maps and diagrams. The intention of rural planning systems is to achieve a framework within which rural development programmes and projects can take place in an integrated and complementary manner.

The seven planning systems of Zimbabwe do not necessarily compete, although there is a history of professional rivalry. Only the physical planning system seeks to be fully comprehensive in that it aims to cover all aspects of social, economic, environmental and management issues. The development planning system has an is economic focus but is definitely cross-sectoral. The environmentally-based planning systems (including land-use planning, environmental action plans, national park plans and forest planning approaches) tend to focus on the natural resource base in one way or another, but they also seek to be cross-sectoral within that limitation. These planning systems and their current status in Zimbabwe are discussed below, and are summarised in Table 6.

4.3.1 Physical planning

(a) Origin

The physical planning system began in 1933 with the first Town Planning Act. At present, it operates under the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act (RTCPA), revised in 1996 but substantially unchanged since 1976. It has traditionally been an urban activity but shifted to a rural focus in 1980 when it was required to provide planning support to the new district councils and to the accelerated programmes of rural development and new rural settlements.

(b) Objectives

The aim of physical planning is to conserve and improve the physical environment and, in particular, to promote health, safety, order, amenity, convenience and general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development and the improvement of communications.

(c) Activities

Physical planning activity consists of two inter-related functions: plan making, and planning control and regulation. The essential theory is that all areas will have a statutory long-term plan and that all subsequent development will be managed and controlled in accordance with such plans. There are also regulations governing the sub-division and consolidation of land.

Table 6: Planning systems in Zimbabwe

Planning Systems	*Institutional Framework*	*Activities*	*Approach*
Physical Planning	DPP and RDCs	Rural Master Plans Site and layouts Combination Plans	Technical, top-down increasingly participatory
Development Planning 1	NEPC	Vision 2020 National Devt. Plans PSIP	Participatory /stakeholder Technical, top-down
Development Planning 2	DPP RDCs	Provincial Annual and 3 Year rolling plans District 3 Year Rolling Plans	Technical, top-down Technical, top-down
Land use Planning	Agritex	Ward and Village land use plans, farm plans.	Used to be technical and top-down, moving to participatory
Water Planning	DWD—ZINWA Water Catchment Councils	Water Plans at river board, sub-catchment and catchment levels	Participatory, process approach but strong technical input
Environmental Planning	DNR DNR/RDCs	Zim Action Plan DEAPs	Participatory approach
National Parks Planning	DNPWLM	National Park development plans	Management planning, with stakeholder participation
Forest Area planning	Forestry Commission	SFM Plans Forestry Action Plans	Stakeholder approach, participatory methods

The plan-making function theoretically consists of a nest or tier of plans of increasing detail. At the apex is the regional plan, within which sit master plans under which are local plans. These are long-term plans; comprehensive in nature with a strong spatial element that includes a detailed study as well as a statement of strategies and polices. In practice the Department of Physical

Planning (DPP), which administers the Act, has had insufficient resources to undertake regional and rural master and local plans. Rural areas have, therefore, generally lacked any physical planning framework, except in the small rural settlements which have informal development plans and statutory layouts. However, over the past few years, the Department of Physical Planning (DPP) has sought to remedy this gap with the introduction of rural master plans and combination master plans which cover areas of more than one local planning authority. In 1999, the DPP had initiated five rural master plans, each one covering the full extent of a rural district council area. In addition, a combination master plan has been undertaken for the Kariba lakeshore region, covering four planning authorities.

In terms of immediate planning activity in rural areas, the DPP hopes to ensure that at least one rural district council in each province has an approved rural master plan. Eventually, the DPP would like to see complete coverage for all 57 districts. In addition, there are plans to include a wide surrounding rural area to the Victoria Falls Combination Master Plan, which was expected to commence in 1999.

(d) Institutional framework

The physical planning system is intended to be a largely local government activity, with checks and balances to protect the national interest vested in the minister. Significant powers to undertake master and local plans are also given to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management and to the Forestry Commission for some forest areas. In practice, because of the historical impoverishment of rural areas, central government (through the Department of Physical Planning - DPP) has undertaken most aspects of planning for rural district councils.

The DPP envisages making an amendment to the Rural Town and Country Planning Act so that rural district councils (RDCs) can undertake their own rural master plans as fully-fledged planning authorities. This links to a broad view that the DPP should focus on policy matters and monitoring and managing standards rather than acting for local authorities. The implications of this are that RDCs will need to employ rural planners and develop their planning capacity generally.

(e) Approach

Traditionally, physical planning has tended to be a technical, top-down activity. There are statutory provisions for public consultation and appeals, but these are seen as coming at the end of the process and are part of due legal process in a situation that can involve either loss of or enhancement of use rights and land values. Participatory planning aims to place ownership of the process with local communities and their immediate representative institutions. This is now encouraged but has not been systematically adopted. Box 2 provides an indication of the anticipated scope and approach of the rural master planning process.

4.3.2 Development planning

(a) Origin

Development planning commenced at a national level immediately after independence, when work began on the Transitional National Plan (1982) and continued later with the first Five-Year National Development Plan. Such plans had no statutory backing. The enlargement of the development planning system to the provincial, district and sub-district levels started in the mid-1980s and was provided for in the Provincial Councils and Administration Act (PCAA) 1986 and in the Rural District Councils Act (RDCA).

(b) Objectives

The original aim of development planning was to provide a basis for determining priorities in public sector capital spending. The emphasis was on annual development plans prepared at ward, district and provincial levels, acting as a bottom-up process to inform ministry spending plans and the national development plan. In the early 1990s, the process was re-oriented towards a more strategic approach and linked more explicitly to the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP).

(c) Activities

Development planning consists of preparing annual and five-year planning documents that set out priorities for rural development projects on a sector basis. Whilst the preparation of such plans is a statutory requirement, they do not carry statutory force in the sense that physical plans do. Thus, the priorities expressed are “wish lists” and are often disregarded by spending ministries and

Box 2: The need for a rural master plan in Bulilimamangwe, Matabeleland South

Introduction: The rationale for rural master plans

With the formation of amalgamated rural district councils, the need to promote development in the new administrative areas was to be spearheaded by the new councils using the rural master plan (RMP) as a tool for planning, co-ordination and management. The RMP preparation process would, in particular, lead to an understanding of the economic and spatial relationships between commercial farming and communal lands and other land use activities within the district. These plans would create a long-term strategic development framework upon which other short-term council development activities would be premised.

The terms of reference for the Bulilimamangwe RMP

Considering the nature of problems experienced by the people of Bulilimamangwe, it would be expedient to have in place a comprehensive strategic plan that addresses all the pertinent issues and suggests feasible and appropriate solutions. The aim of the such plan would be to, inter alia:

- Investigate in detail and highlight the socio-economic, infrastructural and environmental problems in the whole of Bulilimamangwe District;
- Come up with specific strategies and policy proposals addressing identified problems;
- Identify opportunities and potential development that will enable the establishment of a polymorphic economy in the district;
- Come up with concrete policy proposals that will enable the harnessing and transportation of such opportunities into material benefits to the Bulilimamangwe community and beyond;
- Co-ordinate all development efforts in the district and thus ensure an efficient utilisation of resources;
- Strengthen the capacity-building programme for the Bulilimamamngwe Rural District Council.

Source: Extract from the terms of reference for the Bulilimamangwe Rural Master Plan, Department of Physical Planning, 1996.

other rural development agencies. Since 1995, there has been a move at provincial and district level to undertake three-year rolling plans. These are still capital budget plans but there is more effort at an integrated approach.

The five national development plans were abandoned in 1995. In their place, new style economic frameworks have been produced to guide all sector of the economy. The current plan is the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) which covers the period 1996-2000.

All provinces have completed the first and second five-year development plans plans (1985-90 and 1990-1995). However, in general, the third five-year development plans were not embarked upon. Annual provincial development plan work has been patchy with some provinces maintaining the process each year and some having ceased such work in 1995 in favour of beginning the new three-year rolling plans. All provinces are expected to produce three-year rolling plans, and most have done so or are in the process of so doing.

Development planning at the district level has been very patchy. Five-year development plans for district areas have rarely been produced. Most districts have undertaken annual development plans and all rural district councils are currently undertaking three-year rolling plans. An illustration of the way that three-year rolling plans continue to carry on the tradition of long, unrealistic shopping lists is given in Box 3. It is notable that there is a discrepancy

between the level of on-going commitments and the anticipated number and value of projects over the next three years.

Box 3: Umguza District Three-Year Rling Plan: Ditsricy development planning

Aim/Goal

At the end of the implementation of the three-year rolling plan, the programme hopes to have improved the living standard of the communities in the district by making more educational and health facilities available so that children may qualify to enter institutions of higher learning, reduce mortality rate and communicable diseases.

Objectives are to:

- Improve and upgrade existing health and educational structures;
- Identify and construct new health and educational structures;
- Provide and improve teachers' and nurses' housing;
- Provide boarding schools and facilities.

New projects

Health sector	17	prioritised	projects	Value Z$ 11,553,800
Police	2	"	"	Value Z$ 600,000
Education sector	45	"	"	Value Z$ 22,310,333
Natural Resources	14	"	"	Value Z$ 9,541,500
Infrastructure	25	"	"	Value Z$ 95,556,685
Housing	7	"	"	Value Z$ 27,300,000
Total	110	"	"	Value Z$ 166,862,318

On-going projects

Various	8	prioritised projects	Value Z$ 2,080,000

Constraints/Problems

Lack of resources by the implementing agencies could prove a major constraint against achieving the 3 year rolling programme.

Source: Extracts and summary of the Umguza RDC 3 Year Rolling Plan 1999-2001

Development planning at the sub-district level has generally not been undertaken. Some active councillors ensured that some annual ward development plans were produced but they were a small minority. Village development plans are virtually unheard of and it is doubtful if any were produced and submitted.

In recent years, there has been an attempt to produce district and provincial profiles under the development planning umbrella. Work on this activity has been curtailed due to lack of available resources.

(d) Institutional framework

The institutional framework for development planning has been subject to considerable confusion since it was decided to make the process operate at sub-national level. As a *national level* activity, the main confusion has been between the perception of the process as a mix between financial and economic planning. When there was a combined Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning between 1982-1990, there was some clarity since both financial and economic planning components were within the same ministry. When the National Planning Agency (NPA) was formed in 1990, the economic planning function was effectively split from the Ministry of Finance and placed in the Office of the President. It has remained hereever since, although now undertaken by National Economic Planning Commission (NEPC).

When development planning was extended to the *provincial and district levels*, a new duality emerged. The lead agency for such planning at provincial and district levels was initially the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD). This had responsibility for the Provincial Councils and Administration Act (PCAA) and the Rural District Council Act (RDCA) which set out the planning process. The lead actor at provincial level was the Provincial Administrator and the lead institutional body was the Provincial Development Committee (PDC). At district level, the District Administrator was the lead officer and the District Development Committee (DDC) the main institutional body. These officers and the development committees, which they chaired, were the responsibility of MLGRUD. Technical support to the process was given by Department of Physical Planning (DPP), also within MLGRUD.

However, government decided to make NPA, and later the NEPC, the lead technical agency for development planning, notwithstanding that the statutory provisions and lead officers all remained with MLGRUD. Moreover, the slow acquisition of staff at NPA/NEPC meant that the DPP continued to provide technical service to the process until after 1992.

The dual institutional confusion over development planning has remained. NEPC have recently transferred a number of officers to assist the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development in the administration of the Rural Development Fund. Currently NEPC has no presence at provincial or district level. As a result, the DPP has been forced to become, once again, the lead technical support to provincial planning. At district level, the NEPC recognises that the rural district council (RDC) is now the lead agency for development planning. The NEPC still hopes to establish district economic planners in all districts but, for the present, it intends to set up mobile teams of officers to assist provinces and RDCs in the discharge of development planning functions.

(e) Approach:

Development planning at national and provincial levels has been a highly technical activity, undertaken by central government officers without any participatory process. In theory, the process is supposed to be bottom-up, as it starts at the village level and works its way upward. In practice, ward and village level activity has not taken place; and even at district level, it has been a process of each sector ministry outlining its priorities and the district administrator (now the chief executive officer) bringing the document together. Recent changes to the rural district development committee have provided a greater input of the rural district council into the process, but it remains a non-participatory process, and is largely sector driven.

4.3.4 Environmental planning

(a) Origin

Environmental planning is a relatively new planning system that commenced in 1995 as a pilot process initiated by the Department of Natural Resources in the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Tourism. It was supported by UNDP and the IUCN and arose out of a national and donor concern to make Zimbabwe's commitment to Local Agenda 21 a reality in the rural areas. The process is best know by its acronym, the DEAP (District Environmental Action Plan) process. However, the Environmental Management Bill, due to become law in 1999, outlines a requirement for a Zimbabwe Environmental Action Plan as well as DEAPS for all rural district council areas.

(b) Objectives

The purpose of the national environmental action plan is to promote and facilitate the integration of local and national strategies and measures for the protection and management of the environment into plans and programmes for social and economic development. The DEAPs are required to identify the environmental and development issues and problems, identify opportunities, priorities and devise plans of action to manage the issues and problems of the area. (Clause 59 (1) and (4) of the Environmental Management Bill).

(c) Activities

The DEAP process was initially piloted in four districts, later extended to eight rural district council areas on the basis of one per province. In the initial phases, selected wards in the pilot districts were engaged in participatory exercises to identify key issues and problems and devise appropriate actions. District training teams, involving both rural district council and central government officers have undergone training so that they can work alongside the community in a participatory and facilitatory manner. Consultants have been engaged to take the process further so that the first part of DEAP process (the identification of issues and problems) can be completed. This stage was being finalised in 1999.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has plans to extend the DEAP exercise to two districts per province. UNDP has remained an active partner and source of funding.

(d) Institutional framework

Environmental planning is undertaken by the DNR in the Ministry of Mines, Energy an Tourism (MMET) in partnership with the rural district councils (RDCs). A DEAP unit, funded by UNDP, has been established in the MMET. At the district level, the RDC is the lead agency, co-ordinating the work through its Natural Resources Committee. There has been little involvement of the provincial tier in this work. The Provincial Natural Resources Officer of the DNR has only a limited role. A multi-sectoral provincial support team plays a facilitatory role.

It is not clear how DEAPs relate to other district plans. The Environmental Management Bill states that plans prepared under the Rural Town and Country Planning Act (RTCPA) must take account of the Zimbabwe Environmental Action Plan. But the relationship of DEAPs to rural master plans, development plans and other rural plans is not spelt out.

(e) Approach

The DEAP process is clearly established in the Environmental Management Bill as a participatory one and the pilot activity in selected wards has proceeded on the basis of participatory rural appraisals and other participatory approaches. The DEAP process is stated to be committed to various principles:

- Sustaining the ecosystem;
- Participation, starting at the village;
- Ownership by resource users;
- A scale and pace appropriate to local skills, resources and capacity;
- A process that is cross-sectoral and on-going.

Box 4 provides a case study that illustrates some of these features.

4.3.5 Agricultural land-Use planning

(a) Origins

Land-use planning is not a statutory activity but it has received the full support of government since it commenced in the mid-1980s. The key policy document that can be seen to support this planning system is the First Five-Year National Development Plan, 1986-1990. This established a target of land use plans for 100,000 families by 1990. The key internal document that set out the policies, procedures and guidelines for land-use planning was written by Agritex in 1989 and revised in 1990.

(b) Objectives

Land-use planning is designed to achieve sustainable, suitable, acceptable, adequate and feasible land utilisation arrangements in communal lands. More specifically, the activity is designed to consolidate arable and grazing land, nucleate residential land for economic service provision, establish woodlots, gardens and orchards, provide close access to clean, potable water and achieve conservation of resources.

(c) Activities

The original conception of land-use planning involved undertaking the exercise in every village and consolidating these plans into ward summaries. For each village, a detailed socio-economic and agricultural survey was to be undertaken, a land capability and natural resource assessment made and, finally, land-use proposals put forward for ratification by villagers and other stakeholders. The process was to be activated by request from the villagers themselves. Agritex planning officers located at district level have been making land-use plans since 1986. However, a scarcity of manpower, transport and other resources has severely hampered the progress of these plans. In recent years, such progress as has been made has been made possible by levering in resources from suitable rural development programmes. The water and sanitation programme, in particular, has been a crucial support mechanism to land-use planning. In the last few years, as internal resources have dwindled further and the water and sanitation projects have ended, land-use planning has slowed down considerably and in some areas ceased altogether. In addition, to the village and ward-based land-use planning activities in communal lands, Agritex has also been undertaking similar work for resettlement areas and, where appropriate, in communal land re-organisation schemes.

Box 4: DEAP: Lunkubkumi Land Rehabilitation Project

Lunkunkuni vlei rehabilitation lies in Kachechete ward in Hwange, north-west Zimbabwe. Kachechete ward is composed mainly of Ndebele-speaking people who were forcibly moved from Matobo District in 1955 to pave way for Mzingwane dam, commercial farms and game park. Since then, the number of settlers and livestock has increased. Grazing was available in abundance in the Lunkunkuni vlei which had diverse perennial and palatable grass species. Thatch grass was also available. Annual grasses were available in the surrounding forests. During serious droughts or serious grazing shortage, villagers used to take their cattle to the nearby reserved forest area.

Previous development approaches

The colonial government noticed the potential Lunkunkuni vlei had to provide sustainable grazing for livestock, and fenced the area and divided it into paddocks. This fencing meant that the vlei started to recuperate from its rather declining state and livestock began to have access to abundant grazing. But the intended beneficiaries of the project were not consulted by government and people started vandalising the fence at the height of the war of national liberation. The destruction and stealing of the fence led to cattle being left free to graze at will. This gradually affected the vlei and led, once again, to its decline.

A new DEAP rehabilitation project

Realisation that water and grazing shortages were serious, the villagers in the Lunkunkuni vlei suggested that the vlei be rehabilitated under the DEAP programme. This time, emphasis has been put on community involvement in the decision-making process.

Objectives

To improve the human and ecosystem well being in Kachecheti ward within the coming 2 years by:
- Fencing off the vlei and introducing rotational grazing;
- Improving the availability of water through drilling boreholes and allowing natural flow of water in the vlei;
- Introducing other palatable grass and fodder tree species and legumes for veld improvement;
- Improving the viability of thatch grass (*Hyperhenia sp*)

Expected results

After the rehabilitation exercise, the Lunkunkuni vlei will be able to provide:
- Adequate grass for thatching;
- Adequate grass leading to a health stock which can fetch good prices on the market;
- Improved availability of water for both livestock and human consumption. 10 boreholes shall be drilled.
- Improved vlei will assist in the replenishing of ground water leading to improved natural flow and recharging boreholes.

On a smaller scale Agritex also undertakes individual farm plans.

(d) Institutional framework

The lead agency for agricultural land-use planning is Department of Agriculture and Extension (Agritex), within in the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture. Agritex works closely with rural district councils (RDCs) and their sub-district levels and traditional leaders. In theory, Agritex intended to work closely with Department of Physical Planning (DPP) on the issue of village planning DPP would undertake new village layouts to meet the objective of

nucleating scattered residential homesteads. In practice, there was stiff resistance by villagers to re-organising their residential areas and little progress was made.

The role of Agritex and the Department of Rural Development (DERUDE) has, of necessity, been closely linked in resettlement. Whilst Derude and its successors have responsibility for the overall planning of resettlement areas, Agritex expertise is required in producing land capability assessments and land-use proposals.

Approach: Land-use planning has tended to be seen as a technical exercise, involving skills that require trained agricultural planners working out their analysis and plans separate from the community. However, there was always a recognition that land-use planning proposals required acceptance and endorsement by villagers and should be instigated by them. In recent years land-use planning has become a more participatory exercise, involving village participation at all stages. Box 4 below illustrates this new participatory, client-led process.

Box 5: Participatory land-use planning: The Jotsholo example

Introduction

The Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (Agritex) has since 1990 developed a participatory land-use planning approach, starting with the village as the basis for all plans. It was realised that challenges facing land-use planning are not only technical, but also largely social in the sense that people's needs, preferences and priorities are always changing. Thus planning has become a combined effort by both the planners and the community to evaluate and assess the full agricultural production and developmental potential of a given village.

Jotsholo Village

In the Jotsholo village in Lupane District in Matabeleland North Province, Agritex was requested by the village through the RDC to come up with a land-use plan which would facilitate sustainable development in this dry region where people's livelihood is dependent on livestock production and very little crop production. A team of planners went to the village and did a detailed resource survey with the community. The Headman, councillor, school authorities, health officials and village committee jointly identified boundaries of the village physically and mapped the arable and grazing lands, water points, forest areas and the related infrastructure such as schools, clinics, dip tanks and access roads. These were then analysed and related to the population of the village. An acceptable, suitable and agreed carrying capacity of the village was determined taking into account the requirements of the community.

A total of 6615 hectares were planned for this village and they came up with a consolidated arable land area, consolidated grazing land, nucleation of residential land with provision for piped water, woodlots, orchards, nutrition gardens and infrastructure needs. They also know the carrying capacity of the village in terms of people, livestock and agricultural production. However, most of the plans and projects identified have not been implemented due to a shortage of funds. The exception is the grazing scheme for which donor funds were found.

4.3.6 Water Planning

Origins

As pointed out in the historical section (section 2.2) water catchment planning began as early as the 1940s. The Save-Limpopo catchment has attracted a lot of interest and work over the years and led in the 1960s to the establishment of a statutory board for the area, a principle that was later extended to other catchment areas. In 1976 the Water Act established an obligation on the Minister to prepare outline water development plans for each river system. However, no progress was ever made with this requirement and no water development plans ever approved. The new Water Act, 1998 revives the idea of producing outline water development plans, which it calls water catchment plans.

Objectives

The objectives of water catchment planning are seen as fourfold:

- To ensure equal opportunity to all to access water;
- To achieve integration between various sectors such as agriculture, mining and industry, domestic use and environmental needs;
- To achieve sustainability such that future generations can enjoy the resource;
- To conserve water for efficient use.

Activities

Seven Water Catchments are to be established, as shown in the attached Map. For each area a Water Catchment Council will be formed comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair of Sub-Catchment Boards. Sub-Catchment Boards will comprise the Chair and Vice-Chair of Water User Boards, which are elected. Plans will commence at the lowest tier and be submitted to the RDC for approval. Sub-Catchment water plans will be an amalgam of the water users Board plans. The Water Catchment Council Plan will be made up of the various Sub-Catchment Plans.

Pilot work has commenced in the Mazowe Catchment Area, since 1996 and in the Mapfure Sub-Catchment Area. In both cases Water-User Boards have been established and planning work commenced. Box 5 below describes the process and progress of the Mazowe Water Catchment pilot project.

Box 6: Mazowe water catchment planning pilot project

Establishing the Structures

Mazowe Catchment covers parts of Mashonaland East and Mashonaland Central. The project was established through the users having a vision for some form of user board which embraced all water users and which covered the whole catchment. From a workshop held in July, 1996 a working group was formed which set about forming Water User Boards (between ward and district level), Sub-Catchment Councils (between District and Provincial level) and then finally the Catchment Council itself which was made up of two representatives from each of the Sub-Catchment Councils, who in turn were made up of two representatives from each of the Water user Councils within their area. This process took a year including beginning to build up 'Awareness', 'Trust', 'Participation' and 'Transparency'.

Water user sectors ranging from the communal areas, the mining, industrial and agricultural are all represented, while civil servants and other identified experts come in a as advisers.

Building the lower tiers

The Mazowe Catchment Council has done a lot of work that includes establishing the lower tier structures in the form of sub-catchment councils and water user boards. Ideas start at the level of the water user boards which is the lowest tier at village level. Work on educating the tiers about their responsibilities is in progress. However, this appears to be one of the challenges to be met. Attendance at meetings, especially those coming from remote communal areas has sometimes been erratic due to the inadequate communication infrastructure and basics like bus fares.

Publicity and Awareness campaigns

The Catchment Council has also embarked upon an awareness campaign to inform water users about the water sector reforms and what is happening in the catchment area. Publicity materials prepared by the Water Resources Management Strategy (WRMS) project both in English, Shona and Ndebele have been distributed but it seems like a drop in the ocean as the Catchment Planning Team always comes back to collect more materials. Establishing a workable and efficient distribution system is another challenge.

Catchment Planning

An integrated catchment plan for the Mazowe catchment is still in progress. It is taking a long time to complete as it is being realised that the task is larger than originally thought and the process more complicated.

Adapted from a WRMS Bulletin, October, 1998.

The plan process consists of a first stage where water resources and land are matched with needs and subjected to an economic and environmental appraisal with full stakeholder participation; and a second stage when a water resources management plan is produced using computer models to optimise water use. Continuous change is envisaged and a formal review is allowed for every ten years.

Institutional Framework

The water catchment planning process is led by the Department of Water Development in the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development. This leadership will pass to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) once this is established. The Act allowing for ZINWA was passed in 1998. Whilst the process is led by DWD they have established an inter-ministerial steering committee to involve all other government stakeholders. Within DWD there is a Water Resources Management Strategy Project (WRMSP) which provides technical and planning support to the process. At the district level there is a strong involvement of the RDCs (and Urban Councils where relevant). In the case of the Mapfure Catchment a Catchment Executive has been formed and other staff include water bailiffs and community development officers.

The programme has had a strong donor input from the GTZ, the Dutch Government and DFID.

Approaches

The water catchment planning process involves a substantial bottom-up process with strong ownership from elected water users boards. There is a strong technical input but it is seen as a supportive process to the stakeholders who are involved in all important decision-making. The approach of the process is seen as an integrated one and on this basis is seen to act as an overarching process to all other planning systems such as DEAPs, Rural Master Plans, Land-use plans and District Development Plans.

4.3.7 National Park Plans

Origins

National Park Plans are a relatively recent innovation. Such plans owe their origin to Government concerns over the management of resources and the rehabilitation of services and facilities within park areas. They are also intended to provide a framework for the process of commercialisation of some of the National Parks services. They are not specifically allowed for in any legislation, although the RTCPA specifies that Master Plans and Local Plans may be prepared for national park areas except for a few areas specified in Schedule 1 of the Act. However, the current National Parks Plans are not being prepared as statutory plans under the RTCPA. They are informal plans that can be seen to stem from responsibilities placed upon the National Park Board in the National Parks Act.

Objectives

The National Parks plans are five-year development plans that seek to ensure a sustainable utilisation of resources among all of the stakeholders within and adjacent to park areas. The plans also aim to provide a rehabilitation plan to restore roads, boreholes and tourist facilities.

Activities

Two five-year development plans have been produced for Gonorezhou and Hwange National Parks. The planning process is also underway for the Matopos and Victoria Falls National Parks areas. These are all part of a five year programme of planning work that is intended to embrace all 11 national parks and 69 recreational parks countrywide.

Institutional Framework

The process is led by the DNPWLM. The DNPWLM have also established a Stakeholder Consultative Group, including the RDC, representatives of CAMPFIRE and adjacent communities, tourist operators, hoteliers and others. A planning Unit has been established within the DNPWLM.
The World Bank, UNDP and the Japanese development agency, JICA, are all involved in providing support to the initial 11 national parks and support is required for the remaining recreational parks.

Approach

Whilst there is some element of a bottom-up approach in this type of planning in that stakeholders are involved it is essentially a technical management exercise, in which the output is intended for the managers of the National Parks and the DNPWLM.

4.3.7 Forest Action Plans

Origins

Forest Action Plans have a similar origin to National Parks Plans except that they are now seen as part of a philosophy of shared forest management. In terms of legislation much the same comments apply as to national parks plans. Rural Master Plans and Local Plans can be undertaken by the Forestry Commission under the RTCPA for all Forest Areas except Gwaai and Fuller Forests. However, this is not being done and the Forest Action Plans are informal plans justified in general terms under the management responsibilities of the Forest Board.

Objectives

The objectives of Forest Action Plans are to provide a development plan for forest areas that provides for social, economic and natural resource sustainability.

Activities

Only one pilot project has been completed for the Mafungabusi Forest in Midlands Province. A new project on Shared Forest Management has commenced in Gwaai and Bembesi Forest Areas and adjacent localities and may eventually embrace several other indigenous forest areas in Matabeleland North. This project is currently examining the options for the illegal settlers in the Gwaai and Bembesi forest areas. Eventually the project will hope to produce Forest Action Plans for these and other areas.

Institutional Framework

The process is led by the Forestry Commission who work in close association with other stakeholders, especially the RDCs in whose districts Forest Areas are present. Other stakeholders include central government ministries, logging companies, tourist operators, community representatives, traditional leaders and so on.

The process has received donor support from GTZ for the Mafungabusi Pilot Project and DFID for the Shared Forest Management Programme.

Approach

There has been a growing appreciation of the need to adopt a participatory approach to both community and stakeholder involvement. PRAs are being undertaken in the SFM Project among both the forest dweller communities and the adjacent communities. Widespread consultation is underway and the aim is to adopt a long term process approach to the planning of forest areas with a strong link to RDCs.

4.4 Institutional and financial support to planning

4.4.1 Introduction

Institutional and financial support to rural development and planning is increasingly derived from donor funding, as indicated in Figure 5. Many Rural Development Programmes are now funded solely or mainly by donors and international NGOs as Government and local authority resources have lessened.

Within Government the operation of planning systems is also now increasingly underpinned by donor assistance in the form of technical support at national and other levels. Many government ministries now have special planning units funded by donors, supporting either rural development programmes or planning systems.

Support to RDCs to improve their capacity to plan and manage has also increased in recent years. This support to strengthen institutional capacity for rural planning has become an increasing feature of overseas assistance and is dealt with below in terms of central and local government.

4.4.2 Support to planning at central government level

Special planning units of one sort or another exist in most government ministries. There are a number of sector support units. Health planning has been assisted in this way for many years by a range of donors. Within the MLGNH, integration of the rural water and sanitation sector has been supported by a National Coordination Unit funded by SIDA. DANIDA and SIDA support the Rural Feeder Roads Programme in the Ministry of Transport and Energy. In the MPSLSW a Poverty Alleviation Unit has been supported by the World Bank and UNDP.

Planning systems have also received support of late. In the MRRWD the evolution of water planning has been assisted by the GTZ and the Dutch Government in the Water Resources Management Unit. In the MMET the DEAP process has been supported by UNDP and a separate programme office established. In National Parks a separate Planning Unit is supported by the World Bank.

4.4.3 Support to planning at local government level

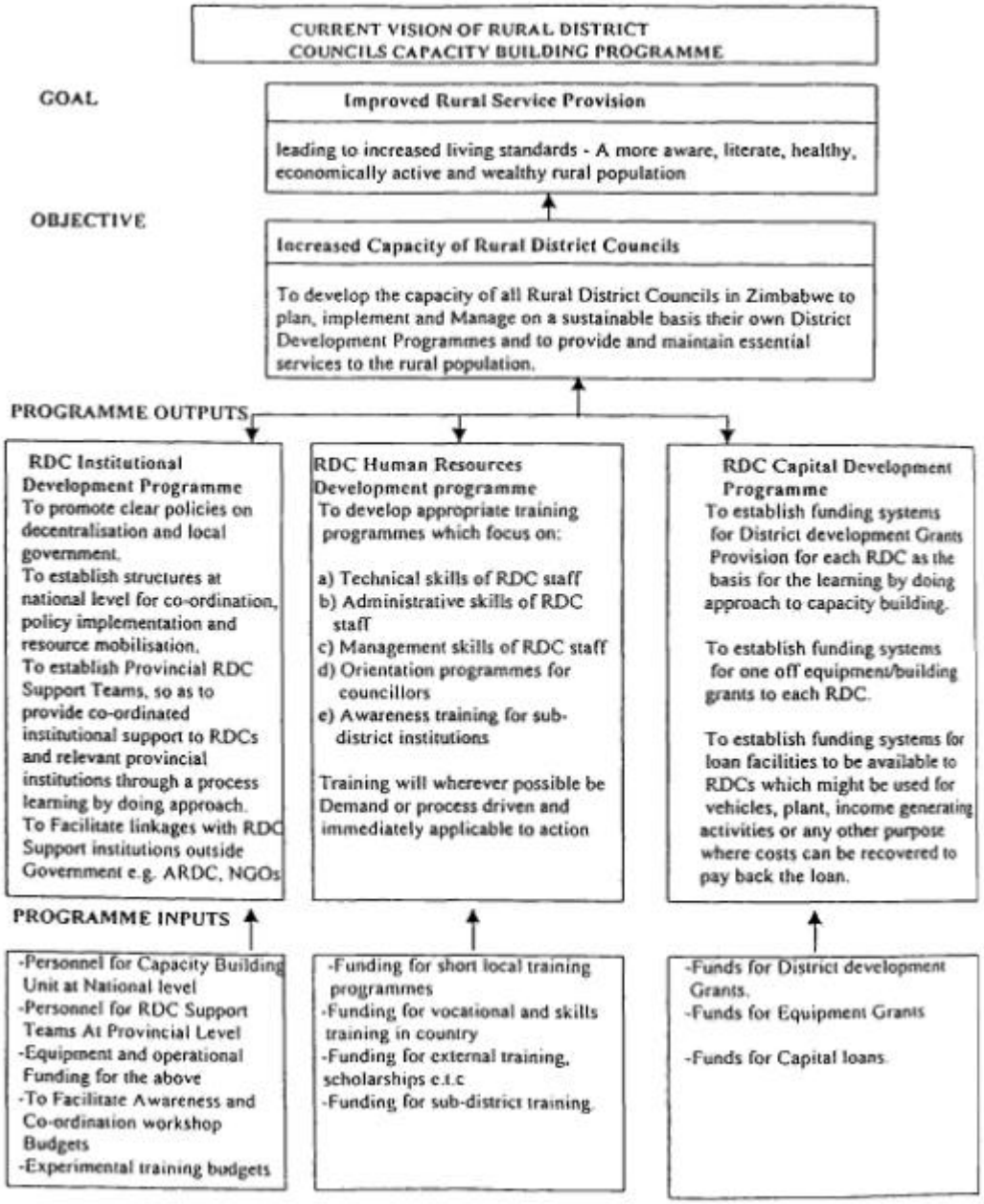
a) Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme (RDCCBP)

In order for functions to be successfully decentralised to RDC the capacity needs to be increased first. In 1993 the MLGRUD in conjunction with the Rural Forum commissioned a further study which produced the Strategic Plan for Capacity Building (SPCB) of RDCs. This Plan formed the basis for the major programme of capacity building for RDCs which has been embarked upon by the now Ministry of Local Government and National Housing (MLGNH) with the support of major donors. At the output level the RDCCBP has three arms, The Institutional Development, The Human Resources Development and The Capital Development components. These outputs are summarised in figure 7 overleaf.

Institutional Development

The institutional development component of the RDCCBP is supported by DFID and consists of providing eight provincial teams of facilitators to work alongside the RDCs. The provincial support teams work in such a manner as to encourage long term sustainability of organisational change within the RDCs, rather than to create any sense of dependency. The work is co-ordinated from the government side by the Capacity Building Unit (CBU) within the MLGNH and by a consultancy company, Development in Practice.

Figure 7: Rural district council capacity-building chart



Human Resources Development

The Human Resources component is supported by SIDA and DANIDA and consists of various forms of training, both on the job and college based, as well as seeking to encourage the RDCs to identify skill gaps and training needs in a Training Plan.

Capital development

The Capital Development component is supported by SIDA, the Dutch, and the World Bank and consists of grants and loans. The **District Development Grants** have been used as a stimulus to learning for the RDCs in the institutional development component as well as a stimulus to rural development. The Grants are made available to all RDCs who fit the selection criteria. The key criteria is to have 3 key staffing posts filled namely the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Finance Officer, and Projects Officer, having up-to-date audited accounts and signed DDG Participation Agreements. The RDC select projects submit a proposal and if successful implement the projects, taking full responsibility for the project. The idea is to learn whilst doing. (see Box 7 below)

Box 7: Key lessons from the district development grant process being learned at RDC/RDDC level

1. Many RDCs have recognised the need for Strategic District Development Planning as the basis for project selection and prioritisation.

2. *Some are starting to appreciate the key role of the RDC as the 'Planning Authority' and 'Co-ordinator of Development' in the district, rather than simply as a 'club' looking after the interests of councillors and officers.*

3. *Almost all RDCs have had great difficulty of defining a 'community project' and the relationship between RDCs and their communities. Most have recognised the difficulties of selecting 'community projects' and of managing their implementation.*

4. *Whilst some RDCs have successfully and effectively completed some of their projects, especially where they have competent projects and planning officers, almost all are recognising weaknesses in RDC project Planning including costings and schedu ling.*

5. *Appreciation of what constitutes consultation with communities really means re-development and project planning.*

6. *Appreciation of the need for sector ministries to provide technical inputs at both district and provincial levels. Also from RDCs viewpoint how much they need sector ministry inputs and the potentially constructive role of the Provincial Development Committee.*

7. *The need for RDCs to establish effective project monitoring systems.*

8. *Those RDCs that chose to implement a large number of small projects are realising the enormous capacity they need to do this. We anticipate a smaller number of DDG projects in 1999.*

Taken from RDCCBP second sixth monthly review, September 1998, CBU, MLGNH.

There is a similar scheme called **District Development Loans**, which can be accessed by RDCs, however the selection criterion is tougher, and as yet no RDCs qualify for this scheme.

b) Other support

SNV, a Dutch development organisation, has been providing technical support to RDC in planning for several years. They second planning experts to work in RDCs with counterparts as a means of increasing the planning capacity of the RDCs. The application is limited to four districts.

MS, a Danish development organisation, has also provided technical support to RDCs for several years, mainly in the field of conservation.
Overseas Voluntary Organisations have also made contributions to RDC development through providing technical experts for limited periods of time. Currently the Swedish voluntary organisation SYD is providing planning expertise to two districts in Matabeleland South.

PART 3

RURAL PLANNING IN ZIMBABWE: ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 5

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the strengths and weaknesses of current rural planning in Zimbabwe. Its objective is to consider whether the present planning systems are adequate to provide the basis for sustainable rural development and, if not, where the main problems lie. The assessment is based on our own analysis of the situation described in Part 3, comments in the literature, the views of key informants whom we interviewed, and discussions at the national workshop held on 10 March 1999.

The analysis is divided into three main parts. These parts correspond to three of the factors which affect sustainable rural livelihoods identified in DFID's analytical framework (Carney, 1998): strategies, structures and processes. The first part focuses on *rural development strategies* - in other words, on the content of rural plans . Although the main focus of the study is on approaches to planning rather than the content of plans (i.e. on structures and processes rather than strategies), a brief analysis of the policy content of Zimbabwe's rural plans is necessary in order to provide a meaningful assessment of their effectiveness in achieving sustainable rural development. The second part looks at *rural planning structures*; that is, at the institutions involved in rural planning. The third part then considers *rural planning processes*; that is, the methods and procedures which are used in planning. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the main issues and problems raised.

5.2 Rural development strategies

There are a number of problems associated with the content of Zimbabwe's rural plans. These may be divided into two main categories: the lack of a coherent national rural development policy and the failure to address key rural development issues.

5.2.1 Lack of a coherent rural development policy

There is no overall national rural development policy in Zimbabwe at present. Consequently, each sectoral agency involved in rural development adopts its own policy. Furthermore, since much of the funding for rural development activities (especially for the provision of infrastructure and services and for innovative research and development programmes) comes from external agencies, policy is heavily influenced by the priorities of these agencies, which often reflect international "development fashions" more than the reality of the Zimbabwean rural environment. The implications of this will be discussed further below.

There has not always been a policy vacuum in this area. In the immediate post-Independence period, rural development, particularly in the previously neglected communal areas, was the main priority under the Government's "growth with equity" programme, and there was a relatively clearly articulated rural development policy, based on the provision of infrastructure and services. This provided a basis for investment by both Government and external agencies, resulting in a major improvement in facilities in most communal areas and considerable expansion in agricultural output

in at least some of these areas. This was a period in which Zimbabwe was widely regarded internationally as a model in terms of rural development.

However, since the adoption of structural adjustment policies in 1990, the situation has changed dramatically. National development policy is now focused on macro-economic stability rather than on development per se and on economic growth rather than equity, whilst the scarcity of financial resources now prohibits any significant amount of Government investment in infrastructure and services. As already indicated, most rural development programmes are now funded by external agencies and, because of the absence of a coherent national development policy, reflect the policies and priorities of those agencies.

The situation is exacerbated by the large number of agencies involved in rural development and the bureaucratic rivalries and jealousies between them. There is no ministry with overall responsibility for rural development and no effective machinery for co-ordination, especially at national level. This is not a new problem. It hampered the implementation of rural development policy in the 1980s. Its effects are, however, more obvious now, because of the lack of a comprehensive national development policy. This problem is discussed further under the section below that deals specifically with institutional issues and problems.

An additional, and related, problem is the lack of a spatial dimension to rural development policy. National development policies are aspatial in nature and, despite various calls for the introduction of a spatial element nothing has yet materialised. Meanwhile, the lack of a clear policy on decentralisation and sub-national planning processes has discouraged the formulation of comprehensive rural development policies at provincial, district or regional level - except in areas (such as the Zambezi Valley (see Box 7 below) and districts such as Gutu, Gokwe and Buhera) where donor agencies have funded some form of multi-sectoral rural development programme. This is also discussed further in the section on the institutional framework.

Box 8: A regional policy framework plan: The Kariba Lakeshore Comination Master Plan

The Kariba Lakeshore Master Plan differs from conventional master plans in the following ways:

- The main role of the Master Plan is to provide a policy framework for the Plan area, within which individual members of the Combination Authority will prepare their own detailed plans. These local authority plans will constitute the main instruments through which the Master Plan is implemented, although there are some areas where action by the Combination Authority itself is required.

- The Plan includes a set of Planning Guidelines to assist the individual local authorities and other relevant bodies to prepare and implement plans and programmes in accordance with the provisions of the Master Plan.

- The Plan has been prepared within the framework of a wide range of national and international policy and legislation, including policy on national parks and wildlife, fisheries, environmental impact assessment, tourism, shipping and cross-border travel, as well as more conventional physical planning concerns such as urban development, settlement planning and infrastructure provision.

- Similarly, the Plan includes strategies and policies which extend beyond the conventional boundaries of physical planning and require action not only by local planning authorities but by other organisations (including central government departments and non-government organisations) operating in the Plan area. It is a natural resource development plan, rather than a conventional land use plan.

- Partly because of the above but also because much of the Plan area consists of Communal land where statutory Development Control procedures are difficult to apply, the implementation of the Plan will involve a variety of measures in addition to conventional Development Control procedures.

- For similar reasons, the Proposals Map, although an essential component of the Plan, does not provide a comprehensive summary of all the key policy components in the way that it does in a conventional master plan, since some of the policies cannot be portrayed in spatial form.

- A major effort has been made to address the conflicts between different interest groups in the area and to ensure that "stakeholders" are involved in the formulation and implementation of the detailed plans and programmes which will be undertaken under the auspices of the Master Plan.

Finally, although the policies prescribed in the Plan can be formally implemented only within the boundaries of the Plan area, it is anticipated that, since many of the issues and problems in the area apply also to adjacent parts of the various local authority areas, the local authorities concerned will, when appropriate, take these policies into consideration when formulating policy for other parts of the areas under their jurisdiction.

5.2.2 Failure to address key rural development issues

The other major set of "content" problems is that current rural development policies are failing to address the key problems of rural areas. The basic problem in rural Zimbabwe is poverty, which although varying in extent from place to place and year to year, is widespread and increasing. The causes of this poverty are complex, but the main ones are inadequate access to good quality land, insufficient and/or erratic rainfall, lack of off-farm employment (in both rural and urban areas), and the spiralling increase in the cost of living. The provision of rural infrastructure and services in the 1980s improved both the quality of life and economic potential, but it did not tackle the more complex issues of access to land and drought and its impact on off-farm employment in rural areas (through the growth centre policy) was disappointing. Meanwhile, the 1990s have witnessed increasing unemployment in urban areas, a deterioration in the quality of social services, and unsustainable increases in the cost of living in both rural and urban areas.

Although these problems are widely recognised, current rural development policies are woefully inadequate. The Government's Poverty Alleviation Action Plan can do little more than alleviate the worst affects of rural poverty, since it does not address the main causes outlined above. The problems of access to land, drought, unemployment and inflation are all highly complex issues for which there is no easy solution, particularly in the current macro-economic environment. The Government's efforts to tackle these issues are currently constrained by a combination of politics, lack of resources, bureaucratic inertia, and the vagaries of the weather.

The many ad hoc, donor-supported rural development programmes are equally ineffective. Donors shy away from land reform because of its complex political and economic implications, while tackling the problems of unemployment and inflation means questioning the basic macro-economic policies, which they themselves are supporting. Consequently, they tend to focus on "easier" issues, such as infrastructure (e.g. IRWSSPs), natural resource management (e.g. Campfire, DEAP, IFAD), and gender-focused projects. These are important policy areas, but their impact is inevitably limited unless the more fundamental problems are also tackled. The limited impact of infrastructure provision has already been pointed out. In the case of natural resource management, one cannot expect farmers to practice sustainable resource management if it is a choice between that and short-term survival, while in the case of gender programmes, the welfare of women is dependent not only on their status within the family and community but also - and probably primarily - on the economic wellbeing of that family and community.

5.3 Rural planning structures

As already indicated, the institutional framework for rural planning has a major - and often negative - impact on both the formulation and implementation of rural development plans. There are five main problem areas: centralisation, lack of inter-sectoral co-ordination, lack of capacity, conflicts between political and technical priorities, and inappropriate external support.

5.3.1 Centralisation

The centralised nature of the Zimbabwean government structure has long been recognised and, as already indicated in earlier chapters, there have been various attempts to decentralise power to sub-national levels. Some progress has been made, particularly in terms of the consolidation and strengthening of the position of RDCs, and there appears to be a greater commitment to decentralisation now than at any time in the almost twenty years since Independence. However, at the time of writing the Government's decentralisation policy is still somewhat vague and there is no detailed implementation programme, although one is currently in preparation. Furthermore, and

perhaps of greater concern, the main reason why decentralisation is at last gaining widespread support within Government is that many central government agencies see it as a means of "passing the buck" of inadequate resources and deteriorating services to RDCs.

The centralised nature of the Zimbabwean bureaucracy has made it very difficult to plan effectively at sub-national level. The main problem has been that manpower and, in particular, financial resources have been controlled at the centre. Consequently, the many attempts to prepare plans at provincial, district and community level have been frustrated because there have been no resources to implement them. The situation has changed somewhat in recent years, since there is an increasing tendency for donor agencies to fund capital projects through RDCs. This has not only encouraged planning at district level but also increased the status and boosted the morale of RDCs. However, these benefits have been compromised by the fact that each donor has its own programme, with its own priorities and planning systems. This makes comprehensive planning difficult and places enormous management burdens on the RDCs. The decentralisation of government structures is unlikely to improve the situation, since (as already indicated) functions are likely to be decentralised without adequate financial resources, thus increasing both donor dependency and local management problems.

An additional problem is the fact that decentralisation has to date focused on the transfer of powers and functions from national to district level. There has so far been very little attempt to strengthen institutions and provide access to resources at community level. The "bottom up" planning system introduced in the 1980s never really got off the ground, primarily because of the confusion and conflict caused by the establishment of new institutional structures (VIDCOs and WADCOs) and (except in areas where Campfire is in operation) lack of access to financial resources. There are signs that the situation could improve in the near future, since the forthcoming Traditional Leaders Act should help to reconcile the conflict between "traditional" and "modern" institutions and increasing efforts are being made to provide financial resources (e.g. through CAP and the community-based component of DDGs) to this level. However, it remains to be seen how effective these measures will be.

5.3.2 Lack of co-ordination between agencies

As already indicated the multiplicity of agencies, government and non-government, involved in rural development hampers rural planning efforts. It makes it difficult to prepare and implement comprehensive plans at national and sub-national levels and frequently results in conflicting policies, duplication of effort, and failure to share both information and resources. The effects are most serious at the local level, where communities are faced with conflicting or competing policies and projects and their leaders are forced to attend so many meetings that they have no time for other activities.

This problem exists in all countries. The multi-dimensional nature of rural development necessitates the involvement of a number of different agencies and the hierarchical structure of most of these agencies inevitably makes inter-agency co-ordination difficult. Moreover, it can be argued that there are advantages in having several different agencies involved, particularly if they include both government and non-government agencies, since there are then more channels by which local people can get access to support. One of the problems of the one-party state model, which was common in many African nations in the 1960s and 1970s, is that access to services is dominated by party members and, in some cases, party officials.

However, this lack of co-ordination has been particularly serious in Zimbabwe, primarily because there is an exceptionally high level of jealousy and suspicion between agencies. This was, in fact, the main reason for the introduction of the "bottom-up" planning system in the 1980s, which involved the establishment of co-ordinating structures at each level - village, ward, district and province. However, their impact was limited. It soon became evident that the establishment of co-ordinating committees does little other than facilitate the exchange of information if financial resources are still allocated at the centre through sectoral agencies. Consequently, the enthusiasm with which those at sub-national level initially embarked upon the preparation of plans was gradually replaced by frustration and disillusionment with the planning process. Furthermore, since the co-ordinating structures were dominated by party members, non-party members found increasing difficulty in accessing development initiatives.

The situation has been further aggravated by the existence of a number of different planning agencies, including NEPC, DPP, Agritex, ARDA, the former Departments of Rural Development and Community Development and, more recently, the Department of Natural Resources. These agencies differ in their professional focus and in their level of operation and, if they worked together could provide an effective rural planning team. However, they have instead seen themselves as rivals, operating independently and, in many cases, in direct competition with each other.

There is evidence to suggest that the situation is now improving somewhat. An exceptional example of inter-agency co-operation exists in Matabeleland South with the Give a Dam Campaign (see Box 8 below). The increasing tendency for donor agencies to channel funds through RDCs, combined with the scarcity of Government financial resources, is encouraging inter-sectoral co-ordination at district level. Agencies which previously operated independently now have to seek funds through the RDC and thus to comply with the RDC's plans and priorities. Moreover, even the different planning agencies are finding that they can no longer afford to compete with each other. For example, NEPC has withdrawn its staff from the sub-national level, while Agritex no longer has the resources to do its own land use planning exercises and so makes its services available to assist the RDC (or other agencies) who do have funds. However, because of the large number of donor-funded activities, each with its own priorities and planning systems, co-ordination remains a problem.

Box: 9: Angency co-operation: The example of the Give A Dam campaign

Background

The Give a Dam Campaign was born in late 1995 out of the experiences of National and International NGOs involved with drought relief activities in the drought stricken Matabeleland South Province. NGOs, Donors, Rural District Councils representing the Communities in Matabeleland South and Government agencies formed a consortium. The aim of the of the consortium is to construct small to medium sized dams to provide water for irrigation, domestic use and for livestock watering. Below are the Give a Dam Partners:

Africare	***Africa 2000 Network***	***Christian Care***
CADEC	***Dabane Trust***	***Mat. Dev. Foundation***
Six RDCs	***Government Agencies***	***ORAP***
Oxfam USA	***Oxfam Canada***	***World Vision***
UNDP	***Evangelical Fellowship***	***Lutheran World Fed.***
German Dev. Serv.		

The Campaign is jointly chaired by the Provincial Administrator of Matabeleland South and the UNDP Resident Representative.

Achievements

- 22 dams substantially completed
- 7 dams under construction
- 21 dams surveyed and awaiting confirmation of funding
- 3 irrigation schemes operational
- 26 new irrigation schemes surveyed, of which 5 are under implementation

Training and Ownership

Each dam constructed under the Campaign is managed by the Dam Management Committee. This is a committee which is selected by the communities and its major responsibility is to help the community to fully participate in all dam related activities. The Dam Management Committees are trained and exposed to various situations sa as to assist them to manage their situations better. Training has been conducted for 33 Dam Management Committees. 47 environmental animators, drawn from the communities, have been trained.

Training is conducted at community, district, provincial and national levels. All training processes are facilitated by District Training Teams which are composed of extension workers from central and local government

Extract from GAD Annual Report 1998

5.3.3 Lack of capacity

Lack of technical and financial capacity to prepare and implement plans is a widespread problem, which affects all agencies and all levels. However, two dimensions of the problem warrant particular mention.

Firstly, the severity of the problem has increased in recent years, particularly in government organisations, because of the lack of financial resources. This has not only hampered day-to-day planning and implementation activities but also reduced the morale of civil servants and encouraged the exodus of staff to NGOs and the private sector. The public sector is thus left with inexperienced and/or unmotivated staffs, who lack the basic resources (such as transport and office equipment) needed to perform effectively. Moreover, the lack of financial resources has, as already indicated, increased dependency on donor funding and, therefore, resulted in "donor-driven" policies and programmes.

Secondly, the lack of both financial and technical resources increases in proportion to both physical and hierarchical distance from the centre. There is less capacity at district level than at provincial or national level, and even less at community level; and there is less capacity in poorer, isolated districts (such as Binga) than in wealthier districts nearer the main urban centres. However, both the Government and external funding agencies have recognised the need to improve capacity at sub-national level, particularly in RDCs, in order to transfer additional functions from the national level. This has resulted in the establishment of the RDC Capacity Building Programme, a major donor-funded initiative to strengthen the planning, management, technical and financial capacity of RDCs.

5.3.4 Conflicts between political and technical priorities

Planning is inevitably fraught by conflicts between "objective" professional or technical priorities and various "political" interests or necessities, and rural planning in Zimbabwe is no exception. As elsewhere, this problem affects the planning process in three main ways. Firstly, development policies and plans inevitably reflect not merely "objective" needs and priorities but also political pressures by the various interest groups. Secondly, the difficulty in reconciling the various conflicting interests (political and technical) frequently delays indefinitely the formulation of policies and plans. And thirdly, the implementation of plans is frequently disrupted by political intervention. The issue of land reform is a particularly obvious example of a policy area where there are complex conflicts between various political and technical interests, but it is only one of many.

There are two ways of regarding the role of politics in planning. One way, which is common among frustrated professional planners, is to regard it as "political interference" in what should be an "objective" technical process. The other, more realistic way is to regard planning as an essentially political process. The latter approach suggests the need for professional planners (and other concerned individuals and organisations) to consider the political implications of their proposals, to "sell" them to the politicians, and to provide institutional support to weaker interest groups in order to increase their political influence. The implications of this in terms of planning methods will be discussed in the next section. At this point, however, it should be noted that there are various efforts to "change the balance of power" within the field of rural development planning. The RDC Capacity Building Programme, which is designed to (among other things) strengthen the bargaining capacity of RDCs is one such example, which is already having a considerable impact. Other examples are the increasing number of attempts, mainly by NGOs (for example, ACPDT, Zimrights and CCJP) to support the interests and strengthen the negotiating capacity of community groups, especially in deprived areas.

5.3.5 Inappropriate external support

Various references have already been made to the role of external agencies in rural development planning and it has already been indicated that, although they provide much needed technical and,

in particular, financial support, there are major problems associated with this support. There are three main problem areas. Firstly, external agencies tend to have their own priorities, which are not necessarily those of the Zimbabwean Government - or of the communities where the projects are located. Secondly, these agencies generally impose their own planning and monitoring systems, which are different from those used by Government - and those of other external agencies. Thirdly, the form in which the support is provided often increases rather than decreases dependency. The first two problems have already been discussed in some detail. However, the third one warrants some elaboration here.

In order to be effective, external support should not merely meet a short-term financial or technical need but result in long-term benefits in terms of the financial or technical capacity of the institution concerned. In other words, as the well-known saying goes, "give someone a fish and s/he has food for today; teach him or her to fish, and s/he has food for life." However, much of the external assistance currently being provided in Zimbabwe is reducing rather than strengthening local institutional capacity. For example, externally supported programmes are increasingly operated by special units within Government agencies, staffed by specially recruited staff on short-term contracts who receive much higher salaries than their counterparts in permanent positions. Similarly, much of the technical assistance provided to RDCs has, at least until recently, involved the provision of expatriate staff who do the work concerned rather than train or facilitate permanent local staff. The RDC Capacity Building Programme is a major exception in this respect, since the basic principle underlying the programme is that of facilitation. However, even it involves the employment of large numbers of short-term contract staff at national and provincial level, thus running the risk of undermining rather than strengthening the long-term support role of the central government.

5.4 Rural planning processes

It is obvious from the description of rural planning activities in previous chapters that there has been a great deal of planning activity in Zimbabwe, particularly since Independence. The various agencies involved in these activities embarked upon them with energy and enthusiasm. However, more often than not, the impact in terms of sustainable rural development has been disappointing. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to identify four main reasons for this: the lack of a coherent approach to rural planning; the gap between planning and implementation; the lack of effective community participation in planning; and a bias towards blueprint rather than process planning. These are discussed in turn below.

5.4.1 Lack of a coherent approach to rural planning

This problem stems from the many different agencies involved in rural planning and the lack of co-ordination between them. Each agency has adopted its own planning methods and procedures, based on its own particular focus of interest and professional bias and, in many cases, influenced by the whims of external funding agencies and their technical advisers.

Various attempts have been made to prepare general guidelines on planning procedures, but most have failed, due to the reluctance of agencies to collaborate. The most obvious example is a series of unsuccessful attempts to reach agreement on provincial and district planning procedures between the two main Government agencies involved, NEPC and DPP. However, there have also been some equally ineffective efforts to reconcile different planning approaches at community level (e.g. between Agritex, DPP and the then Department of Community Development in the 1980s), and a somewhat more successful attempt, lead by the DFID team in Midlands Province, to share experiences between the various external funding agencies operating at district level in the early 1990s.

In some cases, there has been no co-ordinated approach even within agencies. The main culprit in this respect has been DPP, which took the lead in sub-national planning in the 1980s and continues to play an important role but, despite various departmental conferences on the subject, has never had a coherent national policy on planning methods at provincial, district or community levels. Consequently, each province has adopted its own approach, resulting in a wealth of lessons of experience but no overall consistency.

5.4.2 Gap between planning and implementation

Zimbabwe's rural development activities can, perhaps over simplistically but not unjustifiably, be divided into two main types: plans which are not implemented and projects which are executed in a policy vacuum. This applies particularly in the case of spatial (i.e. area) plans and policies, which (because of the multi-sectoral nature of rural development) play a critical role in rural planning. On the one hand, there are many examples of provincial, district, ward and village plans which have not been implemented, ranging in time from the MLGRUD/DPP-led plans of the 1980s to the recent District Environmental Actions Plans (DEAPs) sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources and UNDP. And on the other hand, there are numerous projects, which are planned and implemented by sectoral agencies, or even by local authorities, often with external funding, which do not fit into any spatial policy or plan. These include not only the sectoral projects of agencies such as the Ministries of Education and Health, DDF and Agritex, which are planned on a national sectoral basis, but also projects where there is more scope for local spatial planning, such as those funded through Campfire, the Rural Development Fund (RDF) and the Community Action Project (CAP).

The result of this gap between planning and implementation is, on the one hand, frustrated and disillusioned planners and, on the other hand, projects which do not meet local needs and priorities or fit in with other development activities. The term "planners" here refers not only to the professional planners who have put so much wasted effort into the preparation of provincial, district and community plans which have not been implemented, but to the agencies that have been involved in their preparation (e.g. members of Provincial and District Development Committees) and, perhaps most important of all, community leaders who, time after time, have been asked to indicate their priorities in terms of development assistance, only to find that, if any assistance comes, it is for something totally different.

There are two main reasons for this gap. One is the problem of centralisation, which was discussed; particularly the failure to decentralise control over the financial and other resources needed to implement plans. As long as financial resources are controlled by the centre and allocated through sectoral agencies, it is difficult to link projects and programmes with area plans and priorities. However, it is also due to the adoption of inappropriate planning processes - by both spatial and project planners.

Those responsible for the preparation of spatial plans have tended to ignore the question of resources for implementation, resulting in plans, which are over ambitious and not linked to resource availability. This problem has been gradually recognised, particularly at district level, resulting in some cases in the abandonment of any form of comprehensive area planning but in other cases in attempts to develop more pragmatic planning systems. Such systems have two main characteristics. Firstly, they give most attention to the planning of resources over which the district has control, which are as already indicated in, increasing in number as more external agencies are provide funds through RDCs. Secondly, they use plans as a tool with which to negotiate with

national sectoral agencies or external funding organisations to get financial support for district priorities; in other words, the plans become a means of strengthening their bargaining power with funding agencies. These lessons have not yet been formalised into any form of planning guidelines, but they have influenced the planning practice of some districts, particularly those that have had some external planning support.

Meanwhile, those responsible for project planning (at national, provincial and district levels) have also erred, in that they have tended to plan in a top-down, sectoral and aspatial manner. Inadequate attention has been given to community needs and priorities, a point which is discussed in depth below, or to the relationship with other development activities and the need to see the project as part of a broader spatial strategy for the area. Even at provincial and district levels, the concept of strategic planning is lacking. The few attempts which have been made to prepare strategic plans (for example, DPP's pilot rural master plans) have been top-down initiatives, undertaken in most cases by external consultants and, like so many other spatial plans, unrealistic in terms of the resources for implementation. There is an urgent need for a simple, pragmatic approach to strategic planning, particularly at district level, which can be undertaken by local institutions and provides simple guidelines for the identification of priorities and, therefore, for project planning.

5.4.3 Lack of effective community participation in planning

There has been a great deal of rhetoric about community participation in planning in Zimbabwe since Independence, by both Government and donor agencies. This is reflected in the "bottom-up" planning system introduced through the 1984 Prime Minister's Directive and, more recently, in programmes such as Campfire, IRWSSP, DEAP and CAP. The reality, however, is somewhat different. There are very few cases where rural development interventions have been actually initiated by the communities concerned - or, to see it from another perspective, where communities feel that their needs are really being met by current development interventions. In other words, community participation in planning has, in most cases, been a top-down affair!
There are three main reasons for this.

Firstly, the rhetoric of community participation has not always stemmed from a genuine concern that people should have more control over their own development. In many cases, it has been introduced as a means of maintaining political support and strengthening the role of the ruling party at local level, reducing the costs to Government of the construction and/or maintenance of community services, or obtaining support from external funding agencies, for whom popular participation (like gender awareness) has, for a variety of reasons, become an essential condition for project approval.

Secondly, although significant change is discernible, Zimbabwean culture has not facilitated the adoption of a genuine "bottom-up" planning process. Traditional organisational structures are hierarchical and authoritarian in nature and ordinary people are used to doing what they are told rather than taking the initiative and challenging those in positions of authority.

Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, effective popular participation is, under the best of circumstances, difficult to achieve. It requires time and resources, flexible planning and policy-making systems, and personnel with participatory skills and attitudes. Furthermore, it is not something that can be imposed from above. The main initiative has to come from the communities themselves and the quality of participation is, therefore, dependent to a large extent on the nature of the community concerned, including the commonality of interests, the degree of social coherence, the existence and effectiveness of organisational structures, and the quality of leadership. "Outsiders" can do no more than facilitate the process.

However, the experience with community participation is not entirely negative. The increasing number of participatory planning efforts has contributed to a wider understanding of its nature and complexity and there have been a number of relatively successful cases. These include, on the one hand, some communities where nation-wide programmes such as Campfire and DEAP have involved effective participation and, on the other hand, initiatives by some NGOs, such as ACPDT in Gokwe (see Box 9 below) and CCJP in Binga (PlanAfric 1996). Furthermore, there is increasing evidence that local people are beginning to recognise that they can influence the development process and, therefore, to voice their opinions and take a more responsible attitude to the election of community leaders. The large turnover in local councillors at the 1998 RDC elections is an indication of this growing awareness.

Box 10: Community participation: The example of an ACPDT project in Gokwe North

Prior to the availability of funds for the Leadership Capacity Building Project for Wealth Creation and Development, one of the community publishing activists from Gokwe North initiated a pilot project in Simchembu and Nenyunga wards in Gokwe North, since "people in our area are so committed to development" (Sibanda, 1997). Beginning in November, 1996, the following has been achieved in six months as a result of the initiative, co-ordination, creativity and self-reliance of the trainee leaders and their communities, and with strong moral and technical support but small financial contributions from ACPDT:

- 82 suitable participants (22 women/ 60men) from low income families were recruited for the programme and organised into small units, each with a mobiliser and deputy mobiliser to lead the unit.
- The programme was introduced to and gained support from key local leadership, including chiefs, councillors, extension workers and school heads.
- Individual trainees wrote their life and family histories.
- Units undertook research on the forty-year-old problem of elephants in their area and wrote a petition to the responsible authorities, as well as writing a report on how to improve the management of CAMPFIRE, which was presented to the RDC and the CAMPFIRE national office.
- Trainees wrote the second part of their life stories, identifying their strengths, talents and achievements, and chose symbols to represent themselves – providing both a valuable record of poverty and indicators for measuring change over time.
- Units identified their ideas and suggestions for the Local Leadership Programme, including a list of their learning needs ad suggestions for a name for the Programme.
- Several trainees and other young people in the area have worked with grandmothers to write, translate and illustrate traditional (mainly Tonga) stories. In addition, the grandmothers have initiated the collection of local wild plants and an identification of their uses.
- Trainees have raised ZWD 8000 from local resources towards building a multi-purpose community centre at which to hold workshops, run a pre-school, establish a resource centre, set up an art gallery, and so on. They are also working on a project proposal to assist in completing the centre. *(this could be compared with the top-down idea of Village Development Centres conceived of in the early 1980s by the then Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs. Besides one or two demonstration sites, such centres were never developed.)*
- The units have started a drama group, football club, as well as discovering and encouraging the various artistic talents of their members.

Source: Sibanda, 1997

5.4.4 Bias towards blueprint rather than process planning

Most rural development planning initiatives have adopted a "blueprint" approach. In other words, they have involved the preparation of a comprehensive plan, with a detailed list of projects and programmes to be implemented over a specified time period. This has been the case with the many provincial, district and local area plans which have seldom been implemented because they have not been linked to the resource allocation process and with the various sectoral and project plans which have been funded. The blueprint approach has been encouraged by professional planners, for whom "comprehensive rational" planning is professionally satisfying, and, in the case of sectoral and project plans, by external funding agencies, for whom a blueprint plan is a means of knowing exactly what they are going to fund before they commit themselves to it and a basis for monitoring progress.

The main problem with blueprint planning in the context of rural development is that it is never possible to predict accurately all the details of a project or programme, particularly in the case of projects which are initiated by and/or require a major input from local communities. Consequently, implementation progress seldom goes according to the plan - and if it does, it is usually at the expense of gaining the commitment or understanding of the beneficiary community.

The alternative approach, which is generally known as a "process" (or "learning process") approach, is a more flexible system of planning, in which only the main objectives and strategies and initial action is determined before implementation begins. The project or programme then evolves gradually, through a continuous process of action and reflection, in which both planners and beneficiaries participate. This approach was pioneered in Zimbabwe by the DFID-funded PDSP in Gokwe District and later replicated in the nation-wide RDC Capacity Building Programme. However, in these programmes the concept of a "learning process" approach applies primarily to institutional development, which is the main objective of the programmes, rather than to planning per se. The introduction of a participatory, process approach to planning at district and sub-district levels is one of the "sub-objectives" of the Capacity Building Programme, the intention being that RDCs will gradually learn by experience with District Development Grants (DDGs) - and other district funding sources - how to plan effectively and realistically. However, this learning process is still in the early stages.

5.5 Summary and conclusion

It is obvious from the above analysis that Zimbabwe's rural planning systems are fraught with problems: lack of a coherent rural development policy; failure to address the main issues which affect sustainable livelihoods; centralisation; lack of co-ordination between the many agencies - and many planning approaches – involved; inadequate planning capacity and ineffective institutional support; the gap between planning and implementation; lack of effective community participation; and inappropriate blueprint planning methods.

However, a vast amount of experience has been gained in the almost twenty years since Independence and there is evidence to suggest that some valuable lessons have been learned from this experience. These include a better understanding of the complexities of rural development in an environment like Zimbabwe, where access to resources is highly unequal and there are major conflicts between the needs of short-term survival and those of long-term environmental sustainability. They also include an appreciation of the need for - and problems of achieving - effective planning structures, including decentralisation, co-ordination between agencies, and local

capacity building. And they include a greater awareness of the complexities of community participation and the need for a realistic, process approach to planning. Many of these are lessons which had already been learned in other countries which gained Independence earlier and one could therefore argue that the necessary knowledge could have been gained more quickly, cheaply and painlessly by studying others' experiences. However, as the learning process approach explains, learning by doing is the most effective - and in many cases the only effective - method of learning.

The main concern, perhaps, with regard to the current situation in Zimbabwe is that many of the valuable lessons which have been learned are of limited relevance or are difficult to apply in the present national and international economic environment. The increases in poverty and inequality make it even more difficult to formulate sustainable rural development strategies, while because of declining Government resources, reforms such as decentralisation and community participation are promoted for the "wrong" reasons and therefore run the risk of compounding the problems.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The following conclusions and recommendations are based upon the previous chapters, especially the analysis of the previous chapter coupled with the experience of the authors in rural planning over many years. They are intended to be both a guide to good practice for the purposes of the wider report and an indication of a way forward within Zimbabwe. We have tried to avoid a prescriptive approach, concentrating instead upon ways of improving processes and structures as a means to strengthen the potential for Zimbabwean agencies to arrive at their own solutions to problems. However, where we feel there may be some useful pointers to solutions we have elaborated these as possible options for consideration.

The structure of this chapter follows the adopted division between strategies, structures and approaches.

6.2 Strategies

6.2.1 Conclusions

There are a number of critical issues regarding the content of rural planning in Zimbabwe. In the first place it is widely acknowledged that Zimbabwe lacks an ***overall vision*** to guide rural development and therefore, such strategies as it does have are pursued as separate matters lacking integration. Moreover, this vacuum in national strategic direction justifies donor agencies in imposing their own strategic agendas, which may or may not coincide with Zimbabwean ideals.

Secondly there is a dearth of new thinking regarding ***policy and strategy development*** in rural planning. Linked to this is the fact that there is a lack of ***research*** in certain critical areas and consequently policy makers lack good information on which to base their deliberations.

Finally, issues of rural development in Zimbabwe are beset with growing ***structural problems*** related to poverty, inequality, food security and access to such vital resources as land. These are key issues that require some resolution before sustainable progress can be made on improving rural livelihoods.

6.2.2 Recommendations

National Rural Development Strategy for Sustained, Improved Rural Livelihoods

- The Government of Zimbabwe should seek to develop a National Vision for the sustained improvement of rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe and an integrated set of rural development strategies to meet such a vision.
- District visions and strategies should also be encouraged, guided by the national vision and strategies.
- There is a need for rural development strategies to be multi-sectoral.

Rural Policy Institute

- In order to assist the above process a Rural Policy Institute or think tank may be appropriate. Such an institute could be established as a non-government body, but with full support and participation from all stakeholders.
- Among the immediate areas of concern that may be tackled by such a think tank, or through any other mechanism, are:
  - rural/urban linkages,
  - further research and development of SRL analysis, especially the difficulty of reconciling short-term survival and long-term environmental sustainability, and
  - increased data on who is doing what, where, at what value and with what impacts.

Common approach to structural issues in SRLs

- All agencies working within the field of rural development and rural planning should recognise the importance of addressing key structural issues impacting upon SRLs, such as land reform, poverty reduction and inequality and support national efforts to resolve these and integrate proposed reforms into their own strategies and proposals.

6.3 Institutions

6.3.1 Conclusions

We have identified four main areas of concern in the current way in which rural planning institutions operates in Zimbabwe. The first area concerns ***decentralisation.*** Whilst considerable progress has been made in this field there remain a number of worries. Despite strong government statements to the effect that the focus of decentralisation is to empower RDCs many ministries are pursuing different agendas. There is also a lack of clarity from government with regard to a programme of implementation and proper financing of RDCs. Despite the fact that RDCs are increasingly recognised as the key co-ordinating planning agency at district level some agencies continue to by-pass the RDC.

A second cluster of issues occurs around the question of ***capacity building***. There has been a growing pressure on central government to increase its planning capacity at national level, whilst concomitantly reducing its role in direct service provision. At the same time government has suffered from reduced resources and loss of skilled and experienced staff to the private sector. To meet this gap donor agencies have increased their support. This, in turn has created a new form of dependency. At the RDC level there has been a significant measure of activity to enhance capacity with some measurable success, although much remains to be done. At the community level there is a huge need to build capacity of local institutions and organisations as more and more rural development agencies seek to involve them in the participation and ownership of projects.

A third set of issues concerns the lack of ***integration*** both within and between rural planning sectors. Thus central government remains bedevilled by strong vertical ministry lines and weak cross sector linkages; NGOs operate in idiosyncratic ways and donors pursue their own programmes and agendas without much consultation amongst themselves or with other sectors. The private sector is often ignored by all the others and also operates in its own ways. In addition the vexed question of the role of the province in rural development and planning remains unresolved.

Finally, in what could be seen, as a subset of the above, but deserves separate consideration in the context of this report, is the question of actual and potential overlap and duplication amongst the different planning systems. This stems in part from the absence of an acknowledged leader in the field, resulting in rivalry and competition amongst the different planning agencies.

6.3.2 Recommendations

Decentralisation

- There is a need for clearer statements from government, endorsed by the Cabinet, that decentralisation is primarily intended to devolve functions to RDCs and only secondarily to de-concentrate responsibilities within ministries.
- There is a need for government to establish a timetable for the decentralisation and to ensure commitment of line ministries to this programme.
- In decentralising to RDCs there is a need for decentralisation, not just of planning but of powers, functions and, in particular, access to, or control over resources needed to implement plans.
- The allocation of resources at district level must be linked to the strategies and priorities contained in district development plans.
- Decentralisation must be combined with capacity building (capacity to plan, implement and manage development programmes), at all levels, that is based upon a learning by doing approach.

Capacity Building at community level

- Considerable resources are required to build capacity at community level so as to enable sub-district institutions, especially the future Village Assemblies, to plan, manage and conserve natural resources.
- Similarly capacity building is required to enable community based organisations plan and manage local projects. The capacity building should be facilitatory and imbued with a learning-by-doing philosophy.

Capacity Building at district level

- The increasing role of the RDC in rural planning requires that RDCs establish separate planning departments, headed by a professional rural planner. This will need to be achieved within the wider context of strengthening RDCs through the HRD component of the RDCCBP. As an interim measure it may be necessary for RDCs to combine to support one professional planner who would serve two or three districts.
- The RDDC needs to be strengthened by seeking to ensure that all stakeholders attend, especially where rural planning matters are decided. This may mean altering formats and styles so as to make the Committee's deliberations more attractive to NGOs and the private sector. Efforts need to be made to ensure that district government officials attend, either through mandating or incentives.
- Overseas agencies should come together to agree upon a common set of requirements for project and programme support at district level. The current situation, where each country requires the RDC to comply with their own financial, management and monitoring systems is placing intolerable burdens upon RDCs. At the very least there should be a common core set of requirements with minimal additional special records related to specific country issues.

Provincial level

- The provincial role in rural planning should be to act as a linkage point between bottom-up and top-down planning, as well as to monitor progress and provide special technical support to RDCs.

National level

- Strategies should be developed by the Public Service Commission to ensure that government develops its own capacity to plan and manage rural development rather than rely on donor technical support. Donor support should be seen as building capacity rather than substituting for lack of national resources.
- National level integration of rural planning could be achieved through the Capacity Building Co-ordinating Committee (CBCC) as it includes all the relevant government departments and ministries (except Agritex-which should be rectified). The rationale for using this mechanism is that district level integration of planning must be primarily achieved through the RDC and the RDDC and that the CBCC is the best linked national committee to the rural local authorities.
- The question of agreeing which planning agency, NEPC, DPP or DWD should be first among equals is likely to remain unresolved as each has a legitimate claim. Therefore the approach should be made, as soon as possible, to achieve complementarity between the seven different planning systems in Zimbabwe. This may best be achieved through the CBCC. The basis for agreement must seek to resolve the function, scale, focus and timeframe of each planning output, the way each planning output relates to the others and the roles of the different agencies.
- In addition to the above each planning system should relate to the RDC in a similar manner and in accordance with decentralisation. Guidelines should be made available to RDCs for each planning system setting out expected role of the RDC at district and sub-district levels.

Rural Planning Fora

- The feasibility of establishing Rural Planning Fora at national and provincial level should be explored. Such fora would serve the purpose of bringing all stakeholders together: Government, RDCs, NGOs, Donors and the Private Sector to identify problems and issues and seek ways forward. Their main focus would be on finding ways of working together so as to complement each other and to discuss strategic and policy issues. These partnership arrangements could be jointly funded by all sectors and would meet, perhaps two or three times a year. The provincial fora would include RDC representatives and seek to provide an interface between national and district levels. The RDDC may act as a rural planning forum at district and local level by committing one or two meetings a year to a review of development and progress and involve all sectors in such a discussion.

6.4 Approaches

6.4.1 Conclusions

There is a widespread acceptance among practically all rural development and rural planning agencies of the need for an approach to planning which is *strategic, integrated across sectors,*

focussed, participatory and imbued with a learning by doing process. However, in practice many agencies cling to top-down sectoral approaches which lean heavily upon a blueprint and technical philosophies. There is a need, therefore, to close the gap between rhetoric and genuine practice. Part of the problem lies in the demands of the funders (Government, NGOs and Donors) to see quick results. Another underlying problem is that assistance is often conditional upon adopting certain approaches. This leads to following the approach without genuine commitment or understanding.

6.4.2 Recommendations

Iterative approach

- There is a need for an iterative, top-down and bottom-up approach, with clear national policy guidelines coming down and local needs and priorities filtering up.

Strategic approach

- At all levels there is a need for a simple but relatively comprehensive (i.e. wide-ranging) and long term strategy. The approach needed to prepare this should be multi-sectoral, cutting across different planning professions/systems.
- This strategy should be based upon the identification of key issues/problems/potential and should provide basis for detailed sectoral strategies and projects.

Process approach

- Planning should be process rather than blueprint in approach- less emphasis on comprehensive plan documents, more on multiple outputs (e.g. basic strategy; sectoral policies; budgets; project plans); constant monitoring and revision/rolling plans; quality of planning should evolve over time in response to perceived needs.

District and local levels

- Community planning should, in particular, be demand led. However, outsiders can facilitate by providing information and advice and the district level must be responsive.
- At district and local levels there will be two types of planning: i) planning activities over which that level has control (including control over resources) and ii) identifying priorities for purposes of lobbying for support from higher levels for those activities and resources over which there is no control.

APPENDICES

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Appendix 2
Rural Development Programme Profiles: Central and Local Government Programmes

PROGRAMME NAME & ACTIVITIES	SCOPE OF OBJECTIVES	SCALE OF PROJECT	LEAD AGENCY	DONOR
Land and Environment				
National Parks Rehabilitation Programme	To rehabilitate National Parks and resource management	All National Parks Safari Areas?	Department of National Parks and Wildlife	The World Bank
Zimuto Project	Wetlands rehabilitation with a community focus	Masvingo RDC	Agritex, Forestry Commission and DNR	IUCN
Zambezi Basin Agro-Forestry for sustainable rural development and Agro-forestry research networks for Africa	To generate appropriate agr-forestry technoclogies to mitigate soil degradation and increase fuel wood production	Mashonaland West, East and Central (8 sites)	Ministry of Agriculture with DR&SS and Agritex taking the lead + ARDA	International Centre for Research in Agro-Forestry
Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources	Facilitates economic management of indigenous woodland by communities	Three pilot districts covering three ecological zones. Chimanimani, Nyanga and Rushinga	Department of natural Resources	Multi-funded
District Environmental Action Planning Process (DEAP)	Empowering communities and RDCs to meet the well-being of themselves and the environment through sustainable development programmes	8 pilot districts, one per province. Then to all 57 RDCs	Department of Natural Resources	UNDP and other donors

Community Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources-	To conserve wildlife as a local resource in context of 'decentralisation' thus income generated is retained for local development activities.	National but concentrated in western and lowland districts. 28 RDCs	DNPWLM and RDCs Campfire Association (civil society, WADCOs and RDC structures are involved)	USAID ZimTrust (NGO)
Land-Use and Agriculture				
Smallholder Dry Areas Resource Management Programme	Food security and increased income based on sustainable and drought tolerant resource management by and for the community. Increase AGRITEX's capacity to carry out PRAs.	Two Provinces: Matabeleland South and Midlands: 5 high risk districts currently. To expand to Manicaland and Masvingo: no. of districts?	AGRITEX (attached officer works with RDC's EO Projects officer and RDDC Agriculture Sub Committee)	IFAD Australian Government
Small holder irrigation development	To develop small irrigation schemes in CAs	Manicaland, Masvingo, Mat. South, Midlands and Mat. North	Agritex	KFW (German Bank)
Shared Forest Management	To develop a SFM approach to Forest Reserves. Initial project to consider problem of illegal settlement.	Matabeleland North Province Initially Gwaai and Bembesi Forest Areas and adjacent RDCs	Forestry Commission	DFID
Reforestation Programme	Replace degraded forests in rural areas	National	DNR	Was funded by World Bank, now solely GOZ
Integrated Rural Development Programme	Sustainable rural development and capacity building	Masvingo 3 districts Zaka,	MLA	GTZ

FARMESA Programme	Applying farm level research methods	Apply to district level?	AGRITEX	FAO
ARDA Management	Development of agricultural production systems	Country wide for all ARDA estates	ARDA	Government funded
Land-Use Programmes in Mid Zambezi Valley	To develop integrated and sustainable land use systems	Mashonaland West Province	ARDA	EU
Economic Non Farming Activities				
Community Grants Scheme/ Youth Grants	To provide grants to community groups and youth for income generating projects	Nationwide	MNAECC	Government funded
Infrastructure				
District Development Fund	Providing infrastructure in rural areas (roads, water, small dams)	National coverage	MRRWD	District Development Fund supported by a number of donors
Rural Development Fund As for DDF but 'meeting the wishes of the people'	As for DDF but using another source of funds	National coverage Set allocation per district	MRRWD	Government funded
Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Provide domestic water supplies and sanitation in rural areas	To improve the standard of living through water and sanitation – national perspective defined in terms of % or households with access to W&S	National Coverage	Interministerial Committee including: National Co-ordinating Unit (MLGNH); DWR; AGRITEX; ZINWA (Mixture of implementation from deconcentration to decentralisation of funds to RDCs)	All major donors UNICEF DANIDA DFID SNV

Give A Dam Funding of administrative costs related to dam building.	Specific infrastructural objective to build and rehabilitate 50 small and medium size dams. And associated irrigation schemes	One Province (Matabeleland South) All districts in Province	GAD Committee Chaired jointly by PA Mat. South and UNDP and including several NGOs	UNDP and some International Donors and some private sector
Rural Electrification Programme	To provide electricity to rural service centres	National	ZESA	
Road sector reform programme	To review and improve the management and maintenance of the national road network	National	MTE	World bank, Danida, SIDA
Rural Feeder Roads Programme	To improve access for rural communities to the primary road network	National	MTE	DANIDA
Settlement Programmes				
Resettlement Programmes	To relieve overcrowding in communal areas and improve productivity	National	Office of the President, MLA, MLGNH, MRRWD	Multi-donor funding promised
Growth Points/Service Centres	To upgrade facilities in rural settlements	National	Central Rates Fund, MLGNH and MTI	Government ?

Poverty Alleviation and Drought Mitigation				
Drought Mitigation Programme: Mat. South Province	To overcome perennial drought problems	Matabeleland South	MLGNH- PA	UNDP and other donors
Community Food and Nutrition Programme	Integrated programme to combat malnutrition and poverty.	National	Ministry of Health + sector ministries	SIDA up to last year , now solely GOZ
Householder Agricultural Support Programme	Food security and increased income based on sustainable and drought tolerant resource management by the community	Mashonaland Central : 4 districts	Agritex	Danida
Small scale seed production	To promote sustainable seed supply at farm level and promote food security	Masvingo, Matabeleland North	Agritex	GTZ
Community Action Programmes Investment in Social and Economic Infrastructure and improved natural resource management (funds go directly to community but RDC approves project)	Strengthen local capacity of communities and promote participatory and collaborative planning and implementation through partnerships	Piloted in 12 districts	MPSLSW/RDCs	The World Bank
Institutional Support to Rural Planning				
Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme: Institutional Support	To strengthen RDC capacity to undertake full range of functions and to plan and manage accordingly	8 Provincial support teams providing facilitation to all 57 RDCs	MLGNH (CBU)	DFID
Graduate Engineer Scheme	To introduce professional engineers to RDCs by linking graduate engineers and	14 RDCs in first phase on basis of one graduate per two districts	MLGNH/ MTE	SIDA

	established engineers as mentors and support			
Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme: District Development Grants	To strengthen RDCs capacity institutionally and to provide support for district development as a basis for RDC planning and management learning	As above and linked to it	MLGNH (CBU)	The World Bank
Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme: Human Resource Programme	To strengthen RDC capacity through support to training and skill development	As above and linked to it	MLGNH (CBU)	SIDA + others ?

Appendix 3 Donors and Rural Development in Zimbabwe

DONORS	PROGRAMME/ACTIVITY	LOCATION
Land and Environment		
FAO	National Land Policy	National level support
World Bank	National Parks Rehabilitation	11 National Parks
Japan (JICA)	National Parks Rehabilitation	11 National Parks
UNDP	National Parks Rehabilitation	Gonorezhou N.P.
UNDP/ Dutch Govt.	Africa 2000 Network	12 Community-based projects in various parts of country
UNDP	Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	National level support
UNDP	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)	16 projects countrywide
USAID/ Dutch Govt.	CAMPFIRE	Support through NGO to all Campfire areas
Italy	Sustainable Development and Natural Resources Management Project	Mat. South: Beitbridge Masvingo: Chiredzi Manicaland: Chipinge
NORAD	Regional Wetlands Conservation Project	National Level
European Union (EU)	Minefields Clearance Programme	Zambezi Valley Zim.Mozambique border
Land Use and Agriculture		
IFAD/ Dutch Govt/Australian Govt	Smallholder Dry Areas Resource Management Project	Mat. South: Beitbridge Gwanda Midlands: Zvishavane, Shurugwi, Mberengwa To expand to Manicaland and Masvingo
GTZ	Integrated Rural Development Programme	Masvingo 3 districts
DFID	Shared Forest Management Preliminary Assessment	Mat. North- Gwaai/Bembesi Forests
GTZ	Integrated Indigenous Resource Management Project	Mash. Central: Muzarabani
FAO	Farmesa Programme	National level support
European Union (EU)	Micro-projects Programme	National HQ Regional Units
EU	Assistance to AFC	National level
EU	Small-scale Irrigation Programme	850 smallholder farmers
NORAD	Lake Kariba Fisheries Unit support	Kariba
World Bank	Credit to Communal and Resettlement Farmers	Various areas
FAO	Gender, Biodiversity and Local Knowledge Systems to strengthen Agriculture and Rural Development	Project areas not yet determined
GTZ	Community Based Woodland and Tree Resource	Mash. West: Hurungwe Mash East: Hwedza

	Management Project (Social Forestry)	Masvingo: Mwenezi Mat. South: Gwanda
GTZ	Vegetation Resources Information System	National; level
GTZ	Small scale seed production	
Infrastructure		
UNICEF	Water and Sanitation	Mat. South- Beitbridge, Gwanda and Insiza. Mat. North. Bubi
DANIDA	Water and Sanitation	
NORAD/SIDA/UNICEF	Water and Sanitation (Upgrading wells and sanitation systems	Countrywide
DFID	Water and Sanitation	Mat. North- Kusile District Masvingo- Bikita District
Dutch Govt.	Water and Sanitation	Mash Central- Mazoe District Masvingo- Masvingo district
IRISH AID	Water and Sanitation	Mat. North- Bubi District
JICA	Water and Sanitation	Mat. North- Binga
UNDP	Give a Dam	Mat. South- all districts. Regional Office- Bulawayo
DFID	Rehabilitate Dams and Catchments	Masvingo and Midlands Provinces: 50 dams
DANIDA/KUWAIT etc	National Roads Programme	Various roads
DANIDA/SIDA/ILO	Labour-Based rural roads rehabilitation and maintenance programme	Various roads
DANIDA/SIDA/W.B.	Road Sector Reform and Development Co-ordination	National Unit-RSRDCU Planning Dept of DOR
SIDA	Water Development and small-scale irrigation schemes	Various areas
JICA	Photovoltaic electrification of Rural Areas	National Master Plan plus pilots in Kadoma and Gokwe
Italy	Dam Construction	
Iran	Dam Construction	
Australian Govt.	CARE Small Dams Rehabilitation	Masvingo: Chivi District
Economic, non-farming		
SIDA	Small-scale mining support	Mash. Central- Shamva district
USAID	Micro-finance (Sambuko)	Private sector clients in rural areas (and urban)
USAID	Support to horticulture/citrus growers	
ILO	Support to informal sector	
Settlement Programmes		
UNDP/DFID/WB and others	Support to Inception Phase of Acquisition and Resettlement programme	National support- to be followed by support to specific schemes
Poverty Alleviation and Drought Mitigation		
SIDA		

World Bank	Community Action Plan	National Unit Support officers at 12 RDCs Support to communities in 12 RDCs
CIDA	Child Feeding programme	Midlands- Mberengwa and Zvishavane districts
UNDP and other donors	Matabeleland South Drought Mitigation Programme	Mat. South- all districts
DFID	Nutrition Gardens and Groundwater Development Project	Masvingo: All RDCs
Institutional Support to Rural Planning		
DFID	RDCCBP- Institutional Development Programme	National CBU Eight Provincial Teams facilitation to all 57 RDCs
SIDA	RDCCBP- Human Resources Programme	Support to all 57 RDCs
World Bank/ Dutch Govt	RDCCBP- District Development Grants & Loans	Available to all 57 RDCs
GTZ/Dutch/DFID/NORAD	Water Resources Management Strategy Project	National level
DFID	Water Catchment Planning	Masvingo- Chiredzi-Turwi-Mkwasine sub-catchment
GTZ	Water Catchment Planning	Mash. Central- Mazoe Mash. West-Sanyati
Dutch	Water Catchment Planning	Mash. West- Mupfure sub-catchment
UNDP	DEAP	National Level District Profiles in 8 districts (1 per province)
World Bank	National Park Planning	National Planning Unit Individual Parks Plans
CIDA	Victoria Falls Combination Master Plan	Victoria Falls region/ Hwange RDC
CIDA	EIA Support programme	National level

APPENDIX 5

Report of the Rural Planning Workshop In Zimbabwe
10th March 1999, Holiday Inn, Harare

1.0 Introduction

A one-day workshop was held at the Holiday Inn, Harare March 10th 1999. The report is divided into four sections and follows the day's agenda. Firstly the objectives of the workshop and the context of the project are explained. Secondly, what planning agencies are doing and their roles are examined. The report then explores the key issues and problems as identified by the participants. Finally it moves towards a way forward. Details of organisations and participants attending the workshop can be found at the back of the report.

1.2 Workshop Objectives

- To share and appreciate the perspectives of the various planning agencies in Zimbabwe;
- To agree the key issues and problems confronting Rural Planning in Zimbabwe;
- To explore how planning agencies can work together in complementary roles and approaches.

1.3 The Rural Planning Project Explained

This workshop was held by PlanAfric as part of a study called 'A Rural Planning Review'. This study was commissioned by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) who have in turn been asked to undertake the work by the Department for International Development (DFID) as part of their Sustainable Rural Livelihoods programme.

The Outlook of DFID and the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Theme

- Overall Goal: eradication of poverty.
- Key Objective: strengthening the sustainability of poor peoples livelihoods.
- SRL Theme: this is seen as a new framework for analysis and in brief it is seen to encompass the following;
  - Holistic and dynamic;
  - Realistic;
  - Environmental emphasis;
  - Builds on peoples strengths;
  - Understanding the implications of change;
  - Explicit links made between micro and macro (individual access to assets and policies and institutions at all levels).

- Rural Planning is seen as having an important role to play in the SRL approach because potentially it:
  - seeks to co-ordinate across sectors;
  - identifies important inter-relationships;
  - develops collaborative frameworks.

Role of IIED and the Larger Picture

- The International Institute For Environment and Development (IIED) are undertaking a study of rural planning to identify the key principles of a strategic and partnership approach from a SRL perspective.
- To compliment this international IIED study there are three case studies of rural planning that are currently being undertaken: Zimbabwe, Ghana South Africa.

- The aims of the country study are to:
  - give a detailed review of current practice;
  - provide a critical analysis;
  - detail lessons and principles learnt from experience;
  - fulfil PlanAfric's objectives of the workshop detailed above.

2.0 Who is involved in Rural Planning and What they are Doing

A distinction between rural development programmes and rural planning systems, programme planning and project planning was made. The main implementers of Rural Development Programmes were identified as Central Government through the sector ministries, RDCs, International NGOs and local NGOs. The main financial support for Rural Development Programmes comes from Donors and a lesser extent from International and local NGOs, central government and local government. Some limited support comes from the private sector in the form of loan finance and donated support. The main planning systems which support Rural Development Programmes are central and local government, although programme planning is undertaken by all players to a lesser or greater extent.

The workshop participants looked at the roles and activities of all the key planning systems in Zimbabwe which were identified as:

- Development Planning
- Physical Planning
- Land-Use Planning
- Environmental Planning
- National Park Planning
- Forest Areas Planning
- Water Catchment Planning

2.1 Development Planning: National Economic Planning Commission

Statutory: RDC Act and Provincial Councils Act
Operational: Operational, but not as originally perceived.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: NEPC and DPP (confusion and conflict over roles) and RDC
Current Activities: 3 Year Rolling Plans provincial and district level
Provincial and District level strategic profiles
Proposed Activities: Mobile team is currently being trained to assist RDCs and Provinces in the preparation of plans. NEPC is working towards strategic plans as outlined in Vision 2020.
Comments: 5-year plans abandoned. Annual plans ongoing. No presence at district of provincial level, partly due to the movement of staff from NEPC to the MRRWD and RDF when they were created in 1997.

2.2 Physical Planning: Department of Physical Planning

Statutory: Regional Town and Country Planning Act
Operational: It is currently operational.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: DPP and RDCs to a limited extent. (DNPWLM & FC + consultants).
Current Activities: Rural Master Plans, 3 pilots in Chiredzi, Nyanga, Gokwe South. Two more have been initiated in Goromonzi and Bulilimamangwe.
Proposed Activities: Rural District Councils are to be empowered to undertake their own Master Plans and Layout Plans.
Comments: Regional Plans still possible. A combination of Master Plan approaches can occur. Rural settlement plans and layout plans are still happening, but village planning has been abandoned.

2.3 Environmental Planning: Department of Natural Resources (DEAPs)

Statutory: Environmental Management Bill shortly, NR Act
Operational: Pilots and first phase (historically based on ICAs)
Lead and Supporting Agencies: DNR and RDCs plus UNDP and consultants
Current Activities: One DEAP per Province. The first stage is to establish district profiles working at ward and village level.
Proposed Activities: Moving to two DEAPs per Province.
Comments: There should be a national framework for the DEAPs ie a Zimbabwe Environmental Action Plan by the year 2002 in line with Agenda 21. In theory DEAP's are built up from Ward studies and will be linked to the Community Action Programme (CAP).

2.4 Land-Use Planning: AGRITEX

Statutory: Not statutory, but government policy since independence.
Operational: Currently operational.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: AGRITEX and RDCs supported by donors (eg IRWSS)
Current Activities: Ward based plans, but limited. Resettlement areas, farm planning (LSCF and SSCF), Communal Areas reorganisation.
Proposed Activities: Activities are dependent on resources.
Comments: There is a lack of resources for land-use planning and activities depend largely on donor monies for other programmes. If the land reform programme goes ahead there will need to be a concentration of activity on Resettlement and Communal Area reorganisation.

2.4 Water Planning: Department of Water Resources

Statutory: Water Act 1998
Operational: Currently piloted but historically goes back to the Sabi-Limpopo catchment and 1976 Water Act.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: DWD to become ZINWA later this year plus GTZ (DNR)
Current Activities: Mazoe and Sanyati pilot catchment areas. Establish River Boards, Sub-Catchment Boards and Catchment Boards.
Proposed Activities: The representative of Water Catchment planning was absent.
Comments: Little information available.

2.5 National Park Plans: Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management

Statutory: No specific reference in National Parks Ace. Issue RTCPA, National Park Act Framework.
Operational: Planning is operational.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: DNPWM and World Bank, JICA and UNDP
Current Activities: Gonorezhou Plan and Hwange Plan. 5 year development plans and annual plans. Matopos and Victoria Falls Plans are underway.
Proposed Activities: Complete 5 year development plans for the 11 major national parks (out of 69 parks).
Comments: The National Park involves stakeholders in preparing the Park Plans by establishing a Consultative Group including adjacent communities, CAMPFIRE and cross border elements. There are plans to move towards greater commercialisation in the future.

2.6 Forest Areas Plans: Forestry Commission

Statutory: No specific reference in Forest Act.
Operational: Not yet operational, but moving in that direction rapidly.
Lead and Supporting Agencies: Forestry Commission and DFID

Current Activities: Mufangabusi Pilot Shared Forest Management Project in Matabeleland North.
Proposed Activities: Not known.
Comments: Forest Areas Action Plans mooted, but not widely known.

2.7 Conclusion

There is a very large number of planning systems and if all are operational this could present a very confusing picture in the district. At the worst up to 9 different systems could be present in one district. There is therefore, a need to be very clear on the different roles and responsibilities of the different agencies to ensure a co-ordinated planning process in Zimbabwe.

3.0 Rural Planning Issues and Problems, Group Discussions

The workshop participants were divided into two groups for discussions on the key issues and problems facing Rural Planning in Zimbabwe today. The combined responses of the two groups are detailed below:

CONTENT/CONTEXT ISSUES

- No comprehensive Rural Development Strategy or Policy and no Shared Vision
- The lack of strategy has resulted in fragmented policy based on sectors and largely influenced by donor agendas.
- Unco-ordinated and often conflicting plans and activities.
- Wastage of scarce resources;
- Duplication of effort;
- Few achievements on the ground;
- High level of confusion due to poor communication;
- Lack of participation and interest;
- Difficult to measure progress as no pre-agreed targets and benchmarks;
- Difficult to separate the role of local and central government.

INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

National Level

- The emergence of interministerial committees such as the CBCC and IRWSS have improved co-ordination at this level, however, decisions are not filtering down to lower level;
- Individual Ministries and Departments are aware of their roles but are often too busy protecting their 'turf' in instances where co-operation with others is called for;

Centre/Local Level

- There is a forum for co-ordination the Provincial Development Committee and District Development Committee, however, sector priorities are pursued;
- There has been a change in development thinking from democratic centralism in the 1980s to deconcentration in the 1990s, however, there has been difficulty in adjusting practically to this new decentralised way of thinking;
- RDCs have been promised resources and power, but Central Government has not delivered as there is no will in individual Ministries and Departments to make a change;
- District Development Grants have proved a important for RDCs in adopting a 'learning by doing' approach;

NGOs

- NGOs are often guilty of disregarding the existing structures and priorities and build parallel structures to government. However, increasingly NGOs are going through RDCs;
- NGOs are unco-ordinated

Donors

- Tend to have a disruptive effect on both building the capacity and sustainability development programmes as they create a dependency syndrome;
- They may undermine the role of planning as they come in with predetermined agendas.

APPROACH ISSUES

- Top-down approach predominates as political agendas and donor agendas predominate rural development;
- Participatory planning has been accepted in theory but has not yet reached the stage of allowing people and their institutions to take charge of their affairs (pilot stage eg DEAPs, CAP, NGO programmes. Participatory planning is often used as rhetoric to attract donor funds.
- There is not enough documentation at grassroots level to ensure effective interventions.

3.1 Getting to the Core of the Problems

The three key issues highlighted by the two groups can be summarised as follows:

- *CONTENT:* No Rural Development Strategy.
- *INSTITUTIONAL:* Inter-organisational power struggles and ineffectiveness of co-ordination structures (including RDCs). Plus independence of NGOs, confusion over roles of planning agencies and the negative impact of donors of sustainability.
- *APPROACHES:* Popular participation accepted in theory but not practice.

In reaching the core of these problems there was a discussion on **why is there no coherent rural development strategy?** Much of the reasoning and discussion became centred on institutional issues:

- There are competing interests;
- There is no clear rural development leader;
- There is no effective demand for a Rural Development Strategy;
- The ARDC has no capacity to articulate rural development issues and strategies;
- The institutional framework is not clear or co-ordinated;
- There is a policy vacuum;
- There is a capacity issue;
- There is a lack of political platforms to communicate and develop strategies.

In brief it was concluded that nothing fancy was needed. There was a simple need to improve services and access to services, and a need for community capacity to be enhanced to take advantage of this increased development.

The discussion progressed naturally to **why are there inter-organisational struggles?** The main discussion centred towards the Rural District Councils role in planning and co-ordination.
It was accepted that there were three levels of planning:

- National: strategic;
- Provincial: interface with district and national level;
- RDC: main planning authority.

The RDC was seen as the key planning authority which is strategically placed to co-ordinate all activities, but only if power and resources are decentralised to this level and the capacity to undertake this role is developed.

It was stated that other planning agencies and legislation should recognise the central role of RDCs. It was felt that the role of other planning agencies should be defined in relation to this. There was no time to discuss the approach/processes in detail.

4.0 The Way Forward

The group felt that there is a need for a forum where all key planning agencies are represented. This forum would ensure that the key planning agencies were involved in regular dialogue with each other to inform each other of their activities and future plans. This would hopefully ensure greater compatibility of roles and forum for developing new ideas. In line with the previous discussion on RDCs it was felt by all parties that this forum should use existing structures and go through the Capacity Building Co-ordinating Committee (CBCC). It was noted that all planning systems are already represented on the Committee except AGRITEX which should be included. It was felt that a planning sub-committee should be established under the Policy and Environment arm of the CBCC.

It was also suggested that RDDC should regularly review their existing committee structures to ensure that they are effective and responsive.

List of Participants

	NAME	POSITION	AGENCY
1	Elias Mabaso	Planner	National Parks
2	Innocent Gadaya	Chief Economist	Planning Commission
3	Isaac Zindove	Economist	National Parks
4	Arthur Chipato	Senior Planner	AGRITEX
5	C. Pasi Murakwani	Manager Mash. West	Forestry Commission
6	A. Mlalazi	National Facilitator	Development in Practice
7	E. Mlalazi (Mrs)	Deputy Director	Dept of Physical Planning
8	F. L. Ndlovu	Development Advisor	ARDC
9	R.M Madavo	RDCCBP Coordinator	RDCCBP
10	S. Chakaipa	Deputy Secretary	MLGNH
11	K. Chihambakwe	Assistant Secretary	MLGNH
12	M. Munemo	Director	Dept Natural Resources
13	Sam Kahwa	Facilitator	PlanAfric
14	Dr D.S Gunby	"	PlanAfric
15	Catherine Gunby	"	PlanAfric
16	Dr. D. Conyers	"	PlanAfric

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